DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 385 160 FL 023 170

AUTHOR	Young, Jocelyn; Chu, Richard
TITLE	Demystifying the Chinese Language. A Curriculum Unit for Elementary and Secondary Levels.
INSTITUTION	Stanford Univ., CA. Stanford Program on International and Cross Cultural Education.
PUB DATE	95
NOTE	115p.; For previous versions, see ED 201 175 and ED 349 229. Developed by the China Project.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Chinese; Class Activities; Curriculum Guides; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Ideography; Oral Language; *Second Language Instruction; Uncommonly Taught Languages; Units of Study
IDENTIFIERS	China

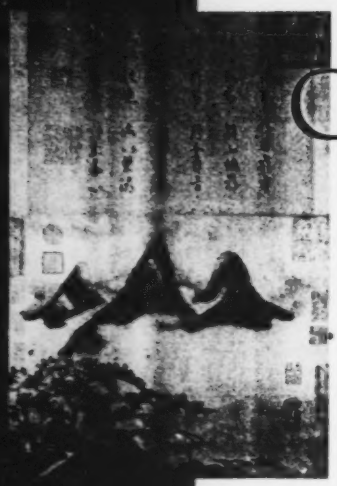
ABSTRACT

The 7-lesson curriculum was originally developed in 1980 and revised in 1988. This second revision includes the creation of a new lesson, lesson four, that deals with creating Chinese characters and stresses that the phonetic element so important in Chinese can also be found in other languages; thus illustrating that Chinese is really not that very different from other foreign languages. The curriculum unit is designed to demonstrate to elementary and secondary level students that the Chinese language actually shares many common language principles with English. It is assumed that familiarizing students with the Chinese language will reduce its "strangeness" for non-Chinese-speaking people. In this sense, the central goal of this unit is not that students learn Chinese, however worthy such a goal might be. Rather, it is hoped that, through a series of exercises which actively involve students with Chinese, students will engage in the process of "demystifying the Chinese language." Content of the units involve social studies, history, communication, linguistics, language arts, multicultural studies, and sociology. Each lesson includes teacher preparation guidelines, student vocabulary, and supplementary activities. Appendixes include history of the Chinese language, language reform policies in China, simplified Chinese characters, and Pinyin pronunciation guides. (Contains 26 references.) (NAV)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 385 160

DEMYSTIFYING THE CHINESE LANGUAGE



山

佃

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

P. Cruz

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BOAT

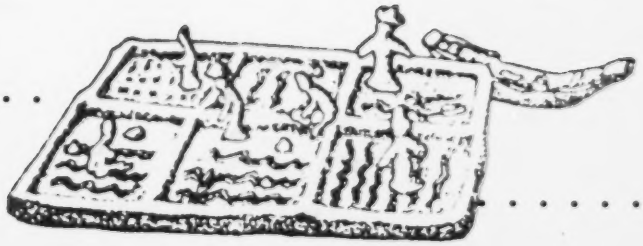
FARMER

HORSE

馬

舟

田



FIELD

FL 023170

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

STANFORD PROGRAM ON INTERNATIONAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATION

A PROGRAM OF THE INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Since 1976 the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE) has supported efforts to internationalize elementary and secondary school curricula by linking the research and teaching at Stanford University to the schools through the production of high-quality curriculum materials on international and cross-cultural topics. Housed in the Institute for International Studies at Stanford University, SPICE has produced over 90 supplementary curriculum units on Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America, the global environment, and international political economy.

COLLABORATION WITH UNIVERSITY FACULTY, AND CLASSROOM TEACHERS

SPICE draws upon the diverse faculty and programmatic interests of Stanford University to link knowledge, inquiry, and practice in exemplary curriculum materials. Within the Institute for International Studies alone, SPICE can draw upon the resources of its 15 interdisciplinary research and teaching programs. The curriculum development efforts of SPICE are also closely linked to two state-sponsored staff development projects also housed at Stanford—the California International Studies Project and the California Foreign Language Project. Each of these programs conduct staff development programs for elementary and secondary teachers in eight California regions. Through these cooperative relationships SPICE is uniquely positioned to field-test and disseminate all of its materials.

CRITICAL THINKING AND MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

SPICE recognizes its responsibility to present multiple perspectives and enhance critical thinking and decision making skills in subject areas such as geography, economics, the environment, history, science, foreign languages, language arts, and fine and applied arts. SPICE's interdisciplinary approach draws upon simulations and role plays, readers' theaters, lessons involving the visual and performing arts, journal writing exercises, and cooperative group activities.

ACCESS TO THE LEARNING PROCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Attention to the unique needs of today's linguistically, ethnically, and socially diverse classrooms is of pressing concern to educators throughout the country. SPICE has made a strong commitment to creating curriculum materials that model effective ways of working with students of all backgrounds. As a result, SPICE is collaborating with the Stanford School of Education to incorporate active learning strategies that increase student access to higher level concepts and full academic participation.

SPICE is a non-profit educational program and receives funding from the Institute for International Studies at Stanford University and several private and government foundations and programs.

Stanford University
SPICE
Quality educational materials since 1976
Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education
Institute for International Studies
Littlefield Center, Room 14
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305-5013
For further information e-mail us at:
SPICE.SALES@Forsythe.Stanford.Edu
or call 1-800-578-1114

This curriculum unit is printed entirely on recycled paper. At SPICE, we share the concern for preserving the environment. We have adopted a policy of using recycled paper for all of our publications. This commitment reflects the concern of all of our employees—a commitment that is further reinforced through an extensive recycling program at Stanford University.

DEMYSTIFYING THE CHINESE LANGUAGE

A Curriculum Unit for
Elementary and Secondary Levels

Developed by

The China Project
Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE)

Revised by

Jocelyn Young and Richard Chu
Asia/Pacific Project, China

Copyright © 1980, Revised 1988, 1995
by the Leland Stanford Junior University Board of Trustees
Permission is given to educators to reproduce handouts for classroom use only.

For further information contact:
Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE)
Institute for International Studies (IIS)
Littlefield Center, Room 14, Stanford University, 300 Lasuen Street,
Stanford, CA 94305-5013
Tel: (415) 723-1114

Printed entirely on recycled paper

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Demystifying the Chinese Language was developed through the collaborative efforts of many individuals, including SPICE Project coordinators, student researchers, Stanford University professors, the SPICE Director, and many others, to whom we offer sincere thanks. The basic concept used in this curriculum unit was originally designed by the China Project of SPICE under the direction of Dr. David Grossman, former SPICE Director.

Demystifying the Chinese Language was first revised in 1988 under the direction of Dr. Michael Chang, former China Project Coordinator for SPICE. The second revision, including the creation of Lesson Four, was conceptualized by Richard Chu and completed by Jocelyn Young, both of the Asia/Pacific Project, China.

SPICE is deeply indebted to the following individuals who provided advice and support to the project: Jane Boston, Director, SPICE; Dr. Al Dien, Professor Emeritus, Asian Languages Department, Stanford University; Dr. Walter Falcon, Director, Institute for International Studies, Stanford University; Dr. Theodore Foss, Assistant Director, Center for East Asian Studies, Stanford University; Dr. Chaofen Sun, Professor, Asian Languages Department, Stanford University. Their support of curriculum development and insight into various aspects of this unit have been invaluable.

Special thanks go to members of the SPICE staff who have donated their time, energy and talent to this project. Appreciation is expressed to the following individuals: Lucía Nuñez, Robin Miyahara, Gary Mukai, Reinhold Steinbeck, and Tuckie Yirchott for their support and encouragement; and Patricia Cruz, for handling this unit's production.

Our sincerest gratitude goes to David Sare, Computer Specialist, Institute of International Studies, Stanford University, for his technical support throughout the completion of this unit. Additionally, the Asia/Pacific Project of SPICE wishes to thank Richard Sakai of Y Design, San Jose, California, for the cover design.

This curriculum unit was revised by the Asia/Pacific Project, SPICE, Institute for International Studies, Stanford University, with funding from the Center for East Asian Studies, Stanford University; the U.S. Department of Education, Title VI; and the Institute for International Studies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

unit introduction

Demystifying the Chinese Language 9
Rationale 9
Unit Goals 10
Materials 10
Time and Suggested Sequence of Activities 11
Grade Levels 11
Subjects 12
Icons 12
Vocabulary 13

lesson one

The Origins of Communication 15
Supplementary Activities 1: The Origins of Communication 20
Samples of Pictographic Symbols 21

lesson two

Discovering Authentic Chinese Characters 23
Handout 2A: Flashcards 31
Handout 2B: Decoded Characters 49
Handout 2C: Newly Discovered Characters 50
Teacher's Guide 2C: Newly Discovered Characters—Answer Key 51
Supplementary Activities 2: Discovering Authentic Chinese Characters 52

lesson three

Changes in Chinese Characters 55
Handout 3A: Chinese Characters—Part A 58
Teacher's Guide 3A: Chinese Characters—Part A—Answer Key 59
Handout 3B: Development of Chinese Characters 60
Handout 3C: Chinese Characters—Part B 61

Teacher's Guide 3C: Chinese Characters—Part B—Answer Key 62
Handout 3D: Matching Exercise 63
Teacher's Guide 3D: Matching Exercise—Answer Key 64
Supplementary Activities 3: Changes in Chinese Characters 65

lesson four

Creating Chinese Characters 67
Transparency 4A: Understanding Chinese Characters 71
Transparency 4B: Significs and Phonetics—Elementary Level 72
Transparency 4C: Significs and Phonetics—Secondary Level 73
Handout 4D: Creating Chinese Characters—Elementary Level 74
Teacher's Guide 4D: Creating Chinese Characters—Elementary Level—Answer Key 75
Handout 4E: Creating Chinese Characters—Secondary Level 76
Teacher's Guide 4E: Creating Chinese Characters—Secondary Level—Answer Key 77

lesson five

Chinese Characters in Context 79
Supplementary Activities 5 83
Handout 5A: The 人 Who Could Not Read 字 84
Handout 5B: "The 人 Who Could Not Read 字"—Glossary 85
Teacher's Guide 5B: "The 人 Who Could Not Read 字" 86
Handout 5C: The 水牛 and The 老虎 87
Handout 5D: "The 水牛 and The 老虎"—Glossary 90
Teacher's Guide 5D: "The 水牛 and The 老虎" 92

lesson six

Language Reform in the People's Republic of China: Achieving Oral Communication 95
Handout 6A: Dialect Exercise 99
Transparency 6B: Dialect Groups in China 100
Supplementary Activities 6: Achieving Oral Communication 101

lesson seven

Language Reform in the People's Republic of China: Improving Written Communication 103

Transparency 7A: Traditional and Simplified Characters 109
Transparency 7B: Spelling in English 110
Transparency 7C: Vocabulary in Chinese 111
Teacher's Guide 7C: Vocabulary in Chinese—Answer Key 112
Supplementary Activities 7: Improving Written Communication 113

appendices

Appendices 115
Appendix A: The Chinese Language 117
Appendix B: Language Reform in the People's Republic of China 120
Appendix C: Reprint of Simplified Chinese Characters 124
Appendix D: *Pinyin* Pronunciation 125
Appendix E: Annotated Bibliography 126

Unit Introduction

DEMYSTIFYING THE CHINESE LANGUAGE

Rationale

In an increasingly international and global environment, we have many opportunities to come into contact with new and unfamiliar languages, whether through international travel or daily contact with a diverse population. Not all of these languages we encounter will belong to the same language family as English, which belongs to the Indo-European language family. Understanding similiarities and differences among languages provides an appropriate supplement to a study of various cultures and societies.

The main purpose of this unit is to demonstrate to students that the Chinese language, though in many ways different from the English language with which they may be the most familiar, actually shares common principles with English language. We assume that familiarizing students with the Chinese language will reduce its "strangeness" for non-Chinese-speaking people. In this sense, the central goal of this unit is *not* that students learn Chinese, however worthy such a goal might be. Rather, we hope that, through a series of exercises which actively involve students with Chinese, students will engage in the process of "demystifying the Chinese language."

The nature of the Chinese language itself has been the subject of much controversy in academic circles. Whether Chinese is primarily based on pictographs/ideographs or significs/phonetics remains ambiguous. This revision of *Demystifying the Chinese Language* attempts to address this controversy by exposing students to the main characteristics of Chinese, which include both pictographic/ideographic and signific/phonetic elements. Yet recent scholarship has shown that perhaps over 90 percent of modern Chinese characters actually are phonetic in origin, not pictographic or ideographic as originally thought. This revision of *Demystifying the Chinese Language* builds upon this assertion by illustrating that because the phonetic element plays such a significant role in the language, students and teachers need not feel so mystified by Chinese, as its origins parallel the origins of many other world languages.

unit introduction

This unit does not require either the teacher or students to have prior knowledge about the Chinese language. Any necessary background information for each exercise in included, often in the Appendices. Please note that this unit does not cover in depth spoken Chinese, as opposed to written Chinese, although we occasionally refer to the spoken language and explain certain relevant features, especially in Lesson Six.

Unit Goals

Knowledge

- to encourage students to create and evaluate written communication systems
- to teach students how to recognize various characteristics of the Chinese writing system
- to help students identify changes that Chinese writing has experienced over time
- to help students identify the issues related to the Chinese language situation and the need for language planning

Attitudes

- to help students relate their own experiences in language, both spoken and written, with the Chinese experience
- to foster positive attitudes among students about foreign languages
- to become more familiar with different aspects of the Chinese language and thus less "mystified" about Chinese culture

Skills

- to help students discover new ideas through inquiry approaches, make hypotheses and generalizations from data
- to teach students fundamental linguistic terms and concepts
- to refine students' discussion and presentation skills in small and large groups

Materials

A list of materials for each lesson is provided on the first page of each lesson.

© SPICE

Time and Suggested Sequence of Activities

Each of the unit's seven lessons can be integrated into your curriculum where it best suits your needs. However, we recommend that you teach the entire unit as a whole. The following suggested sequence of activities will give you an idea of how the unit has been designed. Although *Demystifying the Chinese Language* teaches many valuable ideas and skills, the unit is not intended as an exhaustive resource on the Chinese language.

- *Lesson One (suggested teaching time: 1 class period):*
  Through small group work, students will learn more about establishing an effective form of written communication.

- *Lesson Two (suggested teaching time: 1-2 class periods):*
  This lesson exposes students to two types of Chinese characters, pictographic and ideographic, and encourages them to inquire how these characters communicate an intended meaning.

- *Lesson Three (suggested teaching time: 1 class period):*
  Students will identify changes in Chinese characters since ancient times, hypothesizing why such changes have occurred.

- *Lesson Four (suggested teaching time: 1 class period):*
  This lesson introduces students to phonetic and signific Chinese characters, illustrating that in many ways the Chinese writing system came as a result of oral communication.

- *Lesson Five (suggested teaching time: 1 class period):*
  In this lesson, students will apply the knowledge they have gained from Lessons One through Four, reading a story written with some Chinese characters.

- *Lesson Six (suggested teaching time: 1 class period):*
  This lesson emphasizes the complexity of oral communication in China, having students experience this firsthand through an activity.

- *Lesson Seven (suggested teaching time: 1 class period):*
  This final lesson addresses the issue of Chinese language reform from the standpoint of written language.

Grade Levels

This unit has been designed for both elementary and secondary level students. However, the teacher should further consider the ability level of students, his/her own pace in teaching, and the breadth given to individual lessons.

Supplementary activities, included after most lessons, may be used to further explore a certain lesson with the class or provide

additional research opportunities for interested, individual students. These supplementary activities are not designed as complete lessons, but may be used as springboards for additional classroom or individual ideas.

Please note:

- Lessons Four and Five are divided into both elementary and secondary levels.
- Lessons Six and Seven, while incorporating some board and group activity, rely heavily on student discussion; therefore, these two lessons may either be modified to suit the needs of elementary students or used exclusively for secondary students.

Subjects

- Social Studies
- U.S. History
- Communication
- Linguistics
- Language Arts
- World History
- Multicultural Studies
- Sociology

Icons

For easier reference the following icons are used throughout the unit:

Notes to the Teacher

Background Information

Small Group Activity

© SPICE

VOCABULARY

Bilingual	Having the knowledge of two languages. Used in this unit when discussing the People's Republic of China's multiple language situation.
Character	Logographic symbol of the Chinese writing system which represents an object, idea, concept, or sound.
Compound Ideograph	Character composed of two or more character components, in which the meaning of the character is derived from the relationship of these components.
Dialect	A regional variety of language distinguished from other regional varieties by differences in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The broad term "dialects" refers to varieties of a language which may or may not be mutually understandable.
Ideograph	A picture or symbol used in a writing system to represent an abstract idea which is suggested by the picture or symbol. Also known as an "ideogram."
International Phonetic Alphabet	World-wide standardized communication system in which one orthographic symbol equals one sound.
Language Reform	A planned policy regarding language, implemented to change language in relation to changing conditions and values in the society.
Linguistics	The study of theory, composition, and usages of language.
Literacy	Used in this unit to denote the fundamental ability to read and write a language.
Logograph	A sign or symbol used to represent an entire word or concept. A general term which can refer to ideographs, pictographs, or phonetic characters in Chinese.
Multilingual	Having the knowledge of more than two languages.
Oracle Bones	Animal bones or tortoise shells used for divination in China since the Shang Dynasty. Arguably the source of the earliest Chinese characters.

unit introduction

People's Republic of China	Modern name for China after the Communist government's victory on the mainland China in 1949. In this unit, we use both "China" and "People's Republic of China" interchangeably.
Phonetic	A component of a Chinese character that suggests how the character is pronounced.
Pictograph	A picture or symbol which directly represents an object. Also known as a "pictogram."
Pinyin	(Pronounced peen-yeen.) Romanization system used to transcribe Mandarin Chinese, the national language of China, into an alphabetic system.
Putonghua	(Pronounced poo-tong-hwa.) Literally translates as "the common language." Refers to the national language of China, which is based on the northern Chinese dialect, Mandarin, using Beijing pronunication as the standard.
Signific	A component of Chinese characters that indicates the character's meaning or general category of meaning.
Tonal Language	A language where meaning is determined by tonal utterances, as is the basis of the Chinese language family. For example, Mandarin Chinese has four tones. *Ma* pronounced with a first tone ("mother") has a different meaning from *ma* pronounced with a third tone ("horse").
Trans-literation	Romanizing the sounds of Chinese words into an alphabetic form, or vice-versa.

© SPICE

Lesson One

THE ORIGINS OF COMMUNICATION

Introduction

In this first lesson, students will explore such questions as: How do we develop communication systems? What forms can we use to communicate an idea to others?

Working in small groups, students will attempt to create a written symbol for both a concrete object and an abstract idea. This experience will acquaint students with the logic behind writing systems, such as Chinese, which originated in the pictograph form of writing. This activity will also help students understand the difficulties and frustrations of formulating an effective communication system.

Objectives

- to become acquainted with the concept of pictographic or ideographic writing
- to experience the difficulties in creating an effective form of written communication
- to explore the criteria involved in choosing and developing a system of written communication

Materials

- Index cards
- Chalkboard
- Chalk, enough for each group

Time

Suggested teaching time for this lesson: 1 class period

Resources

List #1: Concrete Objects

horse	bicycle	train	flower	cloud
desk	care	table	lion	cup
duck	apple	bus	book	rabbit
pencil	chair	grapes	star	sun
boat	tree	pig	mountain	house
woman	bird	clock	shoe	man

List #2: Abstract Ideas

Easier Concepts		*More Difficult Concepts*	
smart	life	intelligence	purple
happy	green	government	youth
free	young	hope	honesty
angry	bright	careful	tragedy
hurt	sick	loyalty	pain
love	brave	democracy	creative
joy	hate	jealousy	remember

Teacher Preparation

1. Before beginning this activity with the class, record several concrete objects (from List #1, or those of your choice) on a set of index cards.

2. On another set of index cards, record abstract ideas (from List #2, or those of your choice). Prepare one card with a concrete object and one card with an abstract idea for each group of four to six students.

It is helpful to record the concrete objects and abstract ideas (from Lists #1 and #2) on different colored index cards, keeping the two sets separate. You may wish to advise students not to write on the cards, so that all cards may be used again in the future.

Suggested Procedure

3. Ask the entire class to imagine that they neither speak nor write any known language. Then ask them to try to communicate the concept "river" *without using words*. Students may use alternatives such as body language, sound effects, and written symbols. Have several volunteers demonstrate their ideas to the class.

4. Divide the class into small groups of four to six students each. Give each group one of the index cards prepared from List #1 (concrete objects). Ask each group to create a written symbol for their assigned card. **The students in each group must agree on the chosen symbol.**

5. As each group decides on their symbol, ask a representative from the group to display the chosen symbol on the chalkboard for the entire class to view. When all the groups have recorded their respective symbols, have the class as a whole review each symbol and attempt to guess its meaning. Most likely, the students will select a pictorial symbol to express their concrete

© SPICE

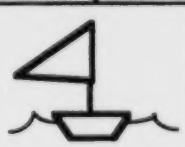
object. Ask the students if they know the name for a written symbol that is pictorial in nature. (*pictograph*)

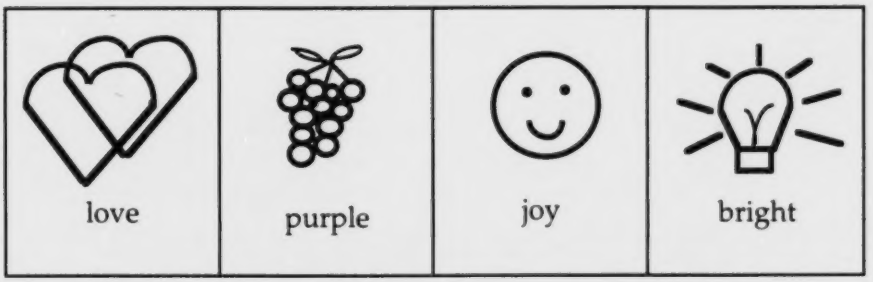
A. Often students are disappointed when classmates correctly identify the written symbol created by their group. Remind students that the *purpose* of the exercise is *communication.* Some students may avoid producing the most obvious symbol for their assigned object or concept; instead, they may create a more complex symbol to obscure the "answer" from their classmates. (For example, students assigned the object "house" may draw an igloo or cave instead of the conventional drawing of a "modern" house.) If you see this happening in the various groups, guide students back to the task of communicating with other groups.

B. To ensure cooperation at the chalkboard, divide the available chalkboard space into sections for each group. Have the representatives drawing the symbols for concrete objects record the symbol in the top half of their group's column of space. Have the student representatives recording their group's abstract symbol place this symbol in the lower half of their allotted space. This division will help preserve each group's symbols, especially as students refer to the symbols later, when discussing pictographs, ideographs, and criteria for choosing a writing system.

C. When students correctly identify the meaning of the symbols created by their classmates, record the answer under the symbol on the chalkboard. This will also help students as they use the chalkboard for reference later in the discussion.

At the completion of this exercise, the chalkboard should resemble the following sample:

Group #1	Group #2	Group #3	Group #4
			
sun	apple	boat	house



6. Determine whether the students thought this task was easy or difficult. Did students have difficulty constructing a symbol for their assigned object? Did they have difficulty determining the meaning of the symbols constructed by other groups?

At this time, you may wish to have students review the available alternatives for communicating a given object. Using "sun," for example, have students list the various ways for communicating this idea. A sample list may include the following:

- the spoken word (in any language)
- the written word (in any language)
- a picture of the sun
- body language representing the sun
- pointing to the sun itself
- finger-spelling
- braille
- morse code

7. Have students return to their small groups. Distribute the index cards with words recorded from List #2 (abstract ideas), one per group. Have each group repeat the process of creating a symbol to communicate the assigned idea. Again, the group must agree on the symbol chosen. As each group decides on a symbol, ask a representative to display the chosen symbol on the chalkboard. When all groups have recorded their symbols on the chalkboard, reassemble to review the new set of symbols and guess their meanings.

8. No doubt the students will realize that simple pictographs are inadequate to express abstract ideas. After the class attempts to determine the concept represented by each symbol created, conduct another "difficulty poll." What obstacles did students encounter, both in creating their symbols and guessing the other groups' symbols? Ask the class if anyone knows the name for symbols that represent ideas. (*ideograph*)

© SPICE

9. Have the entire class attempt to develop criteria for selecting symbols which best convey a given object or idea. Encourage students to consider important characteristics, such as simplicity of the symbol and facility in reproducing the symbol. (The student who draws a detailed picture of a horse may not be thinking about his/her less artistic classmates.) Selecting these criteria will provide a framework for students' understanding of the development of the Chinese language, as explored further in this unit.

✎In Summary 10. Sum up the activity with the following points:

- Constructing symbols for concrete objects is easier than constructing symbols for abstract ideas.
- We can more easily agree on symbols for objects than for ideas.
- Pictographs sometimes seem inadequate for expressing abstract ideas.
- Criteria for symbols we create should include simplicity and replicability. We want everyone to understand the criteria for a symbol system as well as its contents.

THE ORIGINS OF COMMUNICATION

Objectives

- to understand that humans communicate through many forms
- to understand that pictographs and ideographs are a common form of communication
- to recognize the commonalities and differences among various forms of communication

Time

Suggested as supplements to Lesson One

Suggested Approaches

1. In a discussion, have students explore various communication systems such as:

   - body language (kinesics)
   - American sign language
   - Braille
   - Morse Code
   - pig Latin
   - whistling language (Mazteco Indians)
   - football referee's gestures
   - Esperanto/Interlingua (international language)
   - smoke signals
   - drum language

2. Demonstrate to students that some of these communication systems are based on the English alphabet (e.g., Morse Code and Braille), while others are based on a direct correspondence of idea to symbol (e.g., some parts of American sign language, referee's gestures, hieroglyphics, and pictographs).

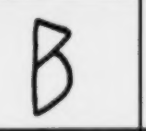
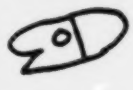
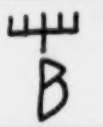
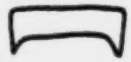
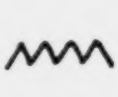
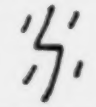
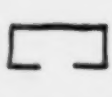
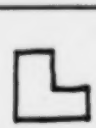
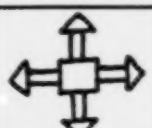
3. Or, concentrate on writing systems by first asking students for a definition of "writing." Record initial responses. Then, have students compare samples of the writing of the Sumerians, Egyptians, Hittites, and Chinese.

   - Which symbols are the most difficult to recognize? Easiest?
   - Which symbols would be the most difficult to reproduce? Why?
   - Among the four cultures, which symbols share the most similarities? Differences?

   Now, ask students again for a definition of "writing." Compare this set of answers with the students' original answers.

© SPICE

Samples of Pictographic Symbols*

Sumerian	Egyptian	Hittite	Chinese	Meaning
				*man*
				*king*
				ox
				*sky*
				star
				sun
				*water*
				*house*
				road
				*city*

* Adapted from *A Study of Writing* by I. J. Gelb, Figure 54, p. 98 (1965 Edition).

Lesson Two

DISCOVERING AUTHENTIC CHINESE CHARACTERS

Introduction

This lesson introduces students to ancient forms of Chinese characters adapted from characters appearing on Shang Dynasty oracle bones (c. 1500-1100 BC). The characters used in this lesson are later forms, dating from around the third century, BC. Both the characters found on the oracle bones and the character forms used in this lesson more closely resemble pictures than do modern Chinese characters.

Objectives

- to investigate the characteristics of ancient Chinese symbols
- to formulate hypotheses about the criteria used by the Chinese in developing their writing system
- to relate the Chinese experience to the students' experience when they attempted to create written communication

Materials

- Appendix A, *The Chinese Language*
- Handout 2A, *Flashcards*
- Handout 2B, *Decoded Characters*
- Handout 2C, *Newly Discovered Characters*
- Handout 2D, *Newly Discovered Characters—Answer Key*

Time

Suggested teaching time for this lesson: 1 class period

Teacher Preparation

1. Before beginning the activity, review Appendix A, *The Chinese Language.*

lesson two

Oracle bones were made from either animal bones or tortoise shells and were carved for the purpose of divination. The characters appearing on these bones constitute the earliest authenticated examples of the Chinese written language.

2. Prepare Handout 2A as flashcards.

3. Familiarize yourself with these flashcard examples of pictographs, ideographs, and compound ideographs.

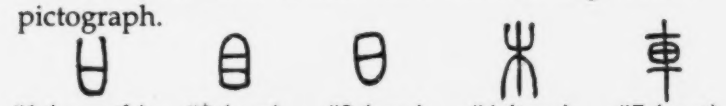
Depending on the age and reading level of your students, you may wish to introduce new vocabulary before beginning the lesson. Here are some of the more difficult words used in this lesson:

- investigate
- oracle bones
- divination
- decipher
- artifacts
- component
- site
- archaeologist/archaeology

Suggested Procedure

4. Review pictographs and ideographs with your students:

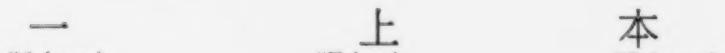
A. Pictographs
- Ask students to explain what a pictograph is.
- Present the following ancient Chinese pictographs by holding up each flashcard (Numbers 1-5) for students to view. Ask students to determine the meaning of each pictograph.



#1 (mouth) #2 (eye) #3 (sun) #4 (tree) #5 (cart)

- Ask your students: "Why do you suppose we call these pictographs?" You may wish to explain the meanings of the roots "picto" and "graph."

B. Ideographs
- Ask students to explain what an ideograph is.
- Again, using the flashcards provided (Numbers 6-8), display the following ideographs for students to view.



#6 (one) #7 (up) #8 (root)

Ask students if anyone can guess the meaning of these ideographs. Most likely, these ideographs will be more difficult

© SPICE

for students to correctly identify. If the class is unable to guess correctly, supply the meanings of the ideographs and explain how each derives its meaning.

5. Probe students to recall their own adventures in using pictographs and ideographs to convey a written message. What were the limits of such forms of communication?

6. Explain that one of the Chinese solutions to the limitations of simple pictographs and ideographs took the form of *compound ideographs*. These are ideographs which have more than one part, communicating ideas that cannot be easily expressed by a simple picture or ideograph. Emphasize to students the importance of the relationship between the different components of the compound ideograph: the meaning of the compound ideograph is derived from the association between the various components.

7. Use the flashcards (Numbers 9-11) to demonstrate examples of compound ideographs. Below is a summary chart of three ideographs used to illustrate this concept.

COMPOUND IDEOGRAPHS

Component #1	*Component #2*	*Compound Character*	*Modern Equivalent*
roof	pig	home (pig under a roof)	家
hand	eye	look (hand shields the eye)	看
woman	child	good (woman and child connote goodness)	好

8. Return to the pictographs for "sun" and "tree" (flashcards numbers 3-4). Inform students that the forms of written characters on these flashcards are the earliest picture-forms of the characters. Over time, the method of writing these characters changed, so that they are now written as follows:

日 (sun)　　木 (tree)

(These later forms are presented on flashcards numbers 12-13)

9. Next, present flashcard number 14 to the class. Ask students to consider the meaning of each component, "sun" and "tree," of the ideograph. Then ask them to consider the relationship between these two parts. Ask if anyone can guess the meaning of the ideograph.

東 (east)

(The sun is rising through the trees; since the sun rises in the east, this ideograph means "east.")

10. If students are having trouble guessing the meaning of this ideograph, point them in the right direction by asking the following questions:

- *Where* is the sun? (In the trees)
- *When* is the sun in the trees? (During sunrise or sunset)
- Where does the sun rise?

(Students may just as rationally conclude that this ideograph represents sunset, guessing that the meaning of the ideograph is "west!")

11. Discuss the examples of the compound ideographs presented in this introduction to Chinese characters. Clarify the relationships between the different parts of the compound ideographs. Emphasize to students that the significance of the ideograph lies in the relationship *between* the components. Remind students to bear this in mind while they engage in their own discovery work!

© SPICE

12. Begin the discovery part of this lesson:
Divide the class into small groups of four to six students each. Give each group a copy of Handout 2B. To assist in group cooperation, you may wish to assign a group leader and/or recorder.

13. Once students are settled into their groups, explain that these ancient characters were developed from characters found on Chinese oracle bones from the Shang Dynasty (c. 1500-1100 BC.), and that oracle bones were animal bones or tortoise shells carved with sayings used to help predict the future. Students may relate this to similar practices of divination in Western culture, like the Sphinx.

14. To set the stage for this discovery activity, explain that experienced archaeologists have already decoded the meaning of the characters on Handout 2A. Now, as junior members of an archaeology team, the class has just returned from a mission in China. During their archaeological dig, class members discovered some additional oracle bones with ancient Chinese characters inscribed on them. However, they have never before seen these characters!

15. Give each group a copy of the newly discovered characters, Handout 2C.

16. Explain to the students that their task is to determine the meanings of these new characters using the characters already decoded as tools to conduct their investigation of the new characters. Remind students of the compound ideograph concept—ideographs whose meanings are determined by the relationship between different parts of the character. Allow students sufficient time to arrive at a meaning for each character. (Required time will vary with each group and each class.)

17. When all groups have completed the task, bring the class back together and have each group share its answers as you proceed through the list. Handout 2D provides the answers. However, whether students are able to arrive at a given solution is not necessarily important. The value of the exercise lies in students' abilities to relate this exercise to their own experiences in developing a writing system.

18. Observe how students arrive at their answers. Most secondary students can conduct their own analysis: What relationships do they see between different parts of each compound ideograph? How do these relationships help them arrive at their definitions?

19. Students should then construct hypotheses regarding the criteria for developing a writing system as adopted by the Chinese people.

20. Finally, students should discuss and compare the standards and techniques for developing written symbols employed by the Chinese and by the class in Lesson One. This discussion is part of the continuing effort to expand students' knowledge, awareness, and appreciation of the available alternatives for written communication.

21. To close the discussion, have students express what they have learned about Chinese characters and, in particular, compound ideographs. You may wish to discuss the following questions:

    - How does the Chinese writing system convey abstract ideas, such as "bright?"
    - How did the class convey similar ideas during Lesson One?
    - Which characters were easier to decipher? Harder?
    - Why do you think some were more difficult to decipher than others?
    - Were there any characters which seemed like they could mean two different things? (e.g., "east")
    - Can students identify which of the characters are pictographs? Ideographs?

✎In Summary

22. Sum up the activity with the following points:

    - A pictograph represents a concrete object, and an ideograph represents an abstract idea.

    - Both pictographs and ideographs have changed form over time.

    - Simple symbols have limitations in that they fail to communicate more complex meanings. Few English words are "simple" in meaning.

    - Compound ideographs were constructed to convey more complex meanings. The meaning of a compound ideograph

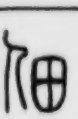
© SPICE

derives from the association between the various components.

- Various types of relationships exist between elements of compound forms.
- Some parts of a compound ideograph are relatively easy to decipher, while others are more difficult: simple symbols can be used as tools to determine the meaning of the compound forms.
- Words used as communication in any language often derive their meanings from human experience: for example, a farmer (佃) is a person (人) who works in a field (田).
- Ideographs constitute only a small percentage of Chinese characters (various scholars estimate anywhere from 3-10 percent). The signific-phonetic characters, which will be introduced in Lesson Four, constitute more than 90% of all Chinese characters.

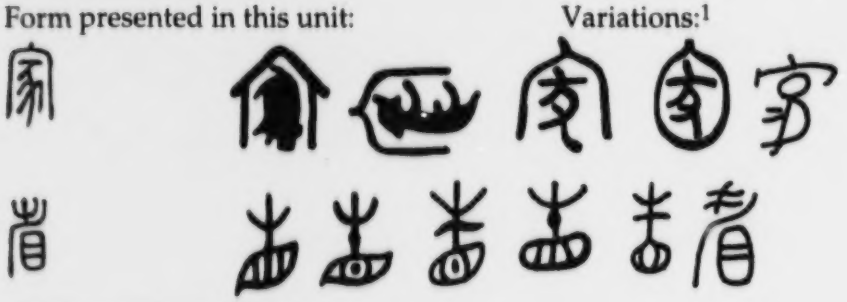
In reviewing the meanings of the new characters with the class, you will undoubtedly encounter a variety of original solutions! Below are the meanings of each character, along with descriptions of their derivation. Also included is a list of "answers" students commonly give.

#	character	meaning	(a) derivation and (b) frequent answers
1		prisoner	(a) a man contained in a circle; (b) one person; lonely
2		follow/agree	(a) two people facing the same direction; one following another; (b) couple; marry; friends; alike
3		branch	(a) pictograph of a tree, with a "pointer" (see Appendix A) indicating the tip of a branch; (b) treetop; high
4		bright	(a) three suns, each contributing its brightness

5		rest	(a) a man leaning against a tree to rest; (b) plant, chop
6		eyebrow	(a) pictograph of the eye ( ) and hair above it ( ); (b) lookup; eyelid
7		forest	(a) two trees, connoting many trees; (b) wood, orchard
8		garage*/ storehouse	(a) a roof with a cart underneath (*originally a storage place for chariots)
9		three	(a) three lines, each representing one; (b) sometimes students will mistakenly concentrate on the different lengths of the three lines
10		farmer	(a) a man and a field; (b) plant, sow, harvest

For many of the ideographs and compound ideographs presented in the discovery exercise, variations existed in ancient times. Although these variations did occur, remember that each variant was intended to represent the same idea. Below are variations of two characters presented in the discovery part of this lesson.

Form presented in this unit: Variations:[1]

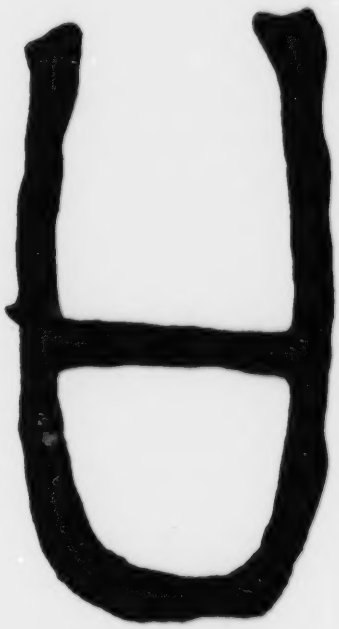


[1] These illustrations of ancient variants are excerpted from *The Etymologies of 3000 Chinese Characters in Common Usage* by Chang Hsuan. Copyright of Hong Kong University Press 1968, pp. 230, 558.

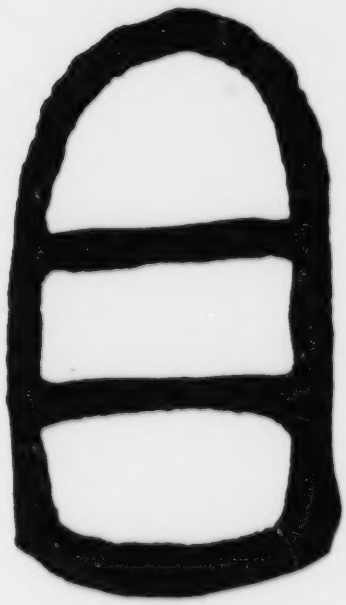
© SPICE

FLASHCARDS (1 of 9)

#1

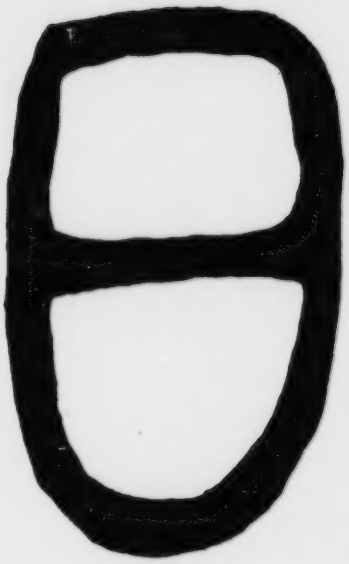


#2



FLASHCARDS (2 of 9)

#3

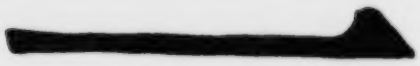


#4

FLASHCARDS (3 of 9)

#5

#6



FLASHCARDS (4 of 9)

#7

#8

FLASHCARDS (5 of 9)

pig

+

roof

=

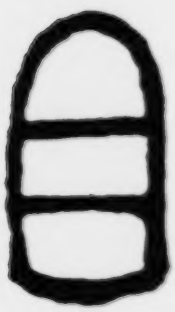
house/
family

FLASHCARDS (6 of 9)

hand

+

eye



=

to look, see

FLASHCARDS (7 of 9)

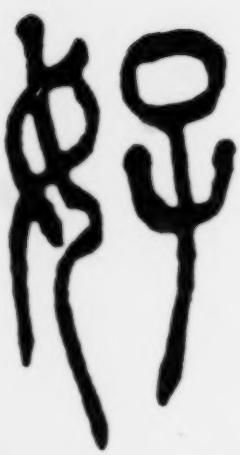
woman

+

child

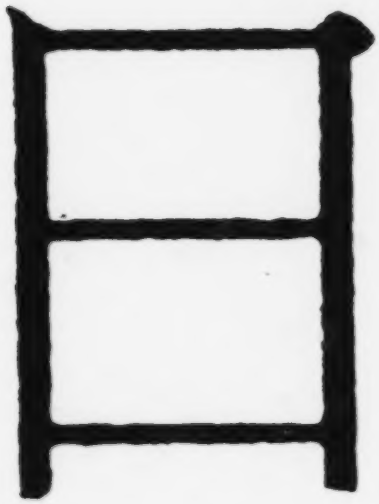
=

good



FLASHCARDS (8 of 9)

#12



#13

FLASHCARDS (9 of 9)

#14

Flashcard Key

1. mouth (ancient)
2. eye (ancient)
3. sun (ancient)
4. tree (ancient)
5. cart (ancient)
6. one (modern)
7. up/above (modern)
8. root (modern)
9. house (ancient)
10. look (ancient)
11. good (ancient)
12. sun (modern)
13. tree (modern)
14. east (modern)

DECODED CHARACTERS

Recently, archaeologists have been working in China to dig up artifacts used by ancient societies in order to analyze these objects and learn how ancient peoples lived.

Your task: Imagine that you are junior members of an archaeology team. On past trips to China, the senior members of your team discovered some tablets and animal bones with writing on them. They "decoded" the following characters:

sun

tree

person

roof

field

cart

eye

one

NEWLY DISCOVERED CHARACTERS

While you were digging in North China, you came across *more* oracle bones with the following characters on them. However, you have never seen these characters before!

Your task: Use your knowledge of the characters on Handout 2B, *Decoded Characters*, to decipher (figure out the meaning of) these new characters. Remember, the Chinese writing system sometimes uses "compound ideographs." Some characters will have more than one part. Pay attention to how the parts fit together into one character. GOOD LUCK!

(1)

(2)

(3)

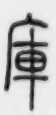
(4)

(5)

(6)

(7)

(8)



(9)

(10)

© SPICE

NEWLY DISCOVERED CHARACTERS—ANSWER KEY

(1) prisoner

(2) follow/agree

(3) branch

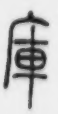
(4) bright

(5) rest

(6) eyebrow

(7) forest

(8) garage/storehouse



(9) three

(10) farmer

DISCOVERING AUTHENTIC CHINESE CHARACTERS

Objectives

- to place the evolution of Chinese writing on a timeline, recognizing that a vast amount of time has passed since the beginning of Chinese writing
- to compare events in Chinese history with more familiar events in Western history
- to understand the role of archaeology in the "creation" of history
- to more fully understand the difficulties in constructing a written language through the example of numbers in Chinese
- to recognize, through examples of compound words and ideographs, that Chinese is not a language entirely different from English

Materials

- History textbooks or other resources of events in Chinese and Western history, such as a computer-generated timeline like *Time Liner*
- Construction paper, optional
- Markers, optional

Time

Suggested as supplements to Lesson Two

Suggested Approaches

Timeline:

1. Have students construct a timeline, beginning with the Shang Dynasty (c. 1500-1100 BC), listing major events in Chinese history to the present. Take note of events relating to language development.
2. Ask students to list events in Western history that they know. Place these events on the timeline as well.
3. Emphasize to students that comparing the timeline of Chinese events in history with Western events in history helps them understand the larger framework of how Chinese writing developed in an historical context.

© SPICE

Archaeology:

1. Have students explore the work of archaeologists and the field of archaeology through books, audio-visual media, or museum trips. Inviting someone who has conducted archaeological fieldwork would be especially appropriate.

2. Within the field of archaeology, emphasize to students the significance of recent discoveries in ancient tombs and sites of ancient Chinese cities.

3. Have students discuss the following questions:

   - What can archaeologists learn from ancient artifacts?
   - How do archaeologists reconstruct the lifestyles of people in ancient cultures?
   - Why are these discoveries important to the study of other cultures and languages?

Numbers:

1. Students now know how to write the numbers "1" and "3" in Chinese. Ask students if they can guess how to write "2" in Chinese (二).

2. Ask students to speculate as to how the Chinese might write "6," "11," or "25."

3. Ask students about the problems that may arise from writing "11" or "25," based on what they know about the numbers "1," "2," and "3."

4. Finally, why would the Chinese *not* use one line per one object beyond the number "3"?

Compound Words:

1. Ask the class to make a list of compound words. Examples may include:

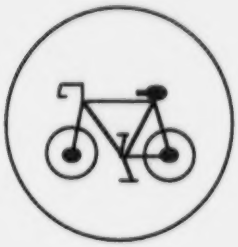
   - mailbox
   - bookshelf
   - racecar
   - football
   - sailboat
   - taxicab

2. Read through the list with your students, analyzing the meanings of each part of the word. Analyze the relationship between the two parts, and discuss how this relationship contributes to the word's meaning.

supplementary activities 2

Ideographs:

1. Draw the following examples of ideographs on the chalkboard and ask students if they can "read" them:



2. Ask students to either draw or bring in their own examples of pictographs and ideographs.

3. Emphasize the importance of using ideographs in daily life. How do such signs communicate an idea without using words?

© SPICE

Lesson Three

CHANGES IN CHINESE CHARACTERS

Introduction

Language is in a constant state of change. As spoken language changes, so must written language. The purpose of this lesson is to illustrate some of the changes that Chinese writing has experienced, from its earliest form to its current form. We will observe the development of Chinese characters from explicit pictographs and ideographs to the more stylized and conventional forms of this century.

Objectives

- to understand that the Chinese written language has experienced change with the passage of time
- to hypothesize why these changes have occurred
- to use these hypotheses in predicting changes in characters with which students are unfamiliar

Materials

- Chalk and chalkboard
- Handout 3A, *Chinese Characters—Part A*
- Handout 3B, *Development of Chinese Characters*
- Handout 3C, *Chinese Characters—Part B*
- Handout 3D, *Matching Exercise*

Time

Suggested teaching time for this lesson: 1 class period

Teacher Preparation

1. Become familiar with the handouts before giving them to your students.

Suggested Procedure

2. Give each student a copy of Handout 3A. Let students work independently to identify the six characters. (Some are in the earliest pictographic form to make them easier for students to

identify. Others are in the form used in the discovery exercise. Students should remember these characters.)

3. Next, show the class Handout 3B, *Development of Chinese Characters*. Ask students to observe the changes among the characters across each row:

   - What changes do you see between the character on the far left of each row and the one on the far right of each row?
   - Which characters look more like the objects they represent?
   - Which character do you think would be easier to draw? Why?

While discussing *Development of Chinese Characters*, remind students to not only *observe* the nature of the character changes, but also *construct hypotheses* addressing the causes of these changes. Students may suggest hypotheses such as:

(1) The characters were modified to exclude unnecessary details in order to make reproduction of characters easier.
(2) Characters were standardized so that all people would interpret the symbols in the same way (e.g., curved lines became straighter).
(3) Changes in written characters reflected changes in writing tools.

4. Now, give each student a copy of Handout 3C. Tell students that they have never before seen these characters, which are in ancient pictographic form. Ask students to look carefully at the characters, trying to determine their meaning. Give students ample time to finish the worksheet.

If students are having trouble identifying the six new characters, you may wish to offer the following hints:

Moon: Point out the crescent shape. What object do you think of when you see a crescent?
Horse: Point out the mane along the horse's neck.
Tiger: Point out the sharp claws. What animal has sharp claws?
Woman: This is a picture of a woman's body, legs, and arms, without a head.
Big: This is a picture of a grown person stretching. How would you try to tell a friend how big something is? (Usually by stretching out your arms to demonstrate the size of the object being described.)

© SPICE

Mountain: This is a cluster of three mountains with the tallest in the center.

5. Students must now predict how the six new figures changed over time. To do this, review with students the answers discussed in Procedure #4. Make a list of specific structural changes in the original six characters. Have students make specific predictions for the forms in *Chinese Characters—Part B*.

6. Once students try to alter the characters themselves, attempting to make the characters easier to reproduce, they will more greatly appreciate the criteria influencing the development of written language. Remind students that the idea is to make characters easier to reproduce without making them unrecognizable.

7. Now, give students Handout 3D, *Matching Exercise*. The characters on the left side are the early pictographs and ideographs the students worked with earlier in this lesson. On the right side of the worksheet are the present-day forms of the six characters. Ask students to draw lines from the pictograph/ideograph on the left to its current form on the right.

8. Finally, the class should review the changes which these characters have undergone. What comparisons can students make between *Chinese Characters—Part A* and *Part B*?

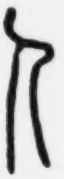
✐In Summary

9. Sum up the activity with the following points:

   - The written language of Chinese has experienced change.
   - To facilitate recognizability and replicability, characters have become simplified and stylized.
   - Many modern characters remind us of their earlier forms. Some, however, seem quite different.
   - The meaning of some characters is fairly simple to recognize, while others pose more difficulties.
   - Language, both written and spoken, is constantly changing.

CHINESE CHARACTERS—PART A

Do you know these characters?

(1)	(2)	(3) 
(4)	(5)	(6)

How many did you remember? _____

© SPICE

CHINESE CHARACTERS—PART A—
ANSWER KEY

Do you know these characters?

(1) sun	(2) tree	(3) person
(4) mouth	(5) field	(6) cart

How many did you remember? _____

DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE CHARACTERS

© SPICE

CHINESE CHARACTERS—PART B

Can you guess what these characters mean? Look at them carefully!

(1)	(2)	(3)
(4)	(5)	(6)

CHINESE CHARACTERS—PART B—
ANSWER KEY

Can you guess what these characters mean? Look at them carefully!

(1) moon	(2) horse	(3) tiger
(4) woman	(5) big	(6) mountain

© SPICE

MATCHING EXERCISE

Look at the characters on the left. They are the same characters you identified in *Chinese Characters—Part B.* Can you match each one with its present form on the right? How has each character changed?

(tiger)

(horse)

(woman)

(moon)

(big)

(mountain)

大

女

馬

山

虎

月

MATCHING EXERCISE—ANSWER KEY

Look at the characters on the left. They are the same characters you identified in *Chinese Characters—Part B.* Can you match each one with its present form on the right? How has each character changed?

(tiger)

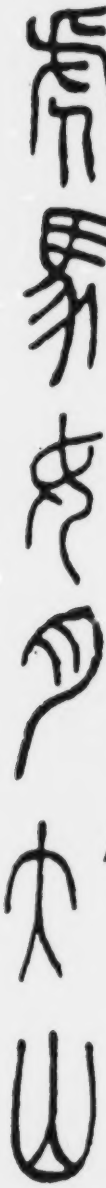
(horse)

(woman)

(moon)

(big)

(mountain)



大

女

馬

山

虎

月

© SPICE

CHANGES IN CHINESE CHARACTERS

Objectives

- to recognize that a relationship exists between writing tools and forms of writing
- to understand that the evolution of Chinese writing progressed in conjunction with evolution in writing tools and materials
- words which are used today in English have changed from their earlier forms, just as words in Chinese have

Time

Suggested as supplements to Lesson Three

Suggested Approaches

1. Generate individual research or group discussion by asking questions such as:
   - What are the inherent differences between using a chisel and stone tablets for writing? An engraving instrument and bamboo? A brush, ink, and silk/parchment? Ball-point pen/pencil and paper? Printing press, ink, and newsprint?
   - What differences in writing instruments might inhibit or facilitate the production of certain forms of characters? (e.g., rounded, straight-edged, simple, complex, thin-lined, thick-lined)
2. Obtain an example of early forms of English, such as Old English or Middle English script. Or, show students the writing in the Declaration of Independence.
3. Have students observe the differences in writing styles between the forms of the past and those we use today.
4. Extend the discussion into comparing the evolution of English writing with the evolution of Chinese writing. How is the process similar and different?

Lesson Four

CREATING CHINESE CHARACTERS

Introduction

The origins of the Chinese writing system are not entirely different from the origins of other writing systems. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that while the Chinese writing system perhaps began with pictographs and ideographs, it is also largely phonetic in origin. Many Chinese characters combine both pictographic or ideographic elements with phonetic elements.

This lesson illustrates how Chinese characters are sometimes composed of two (or more) parts, a *signific* and a *phonetic*. The signific gives the reader a clue to the character's *meaning*, while the phonetic gives the reader a clue to the character's *pronunciation*.

Objectives

- to see similarities and differences between English and Chinese in the construction of a written language
- to illustrate how writing systems often evolve from oral communication
- to discover one of the many ways by which written language is created

Materials

- Chalk and chalkboard
- Overhead Projector

Elementary Level

- Transparency 4A, *Understanding Chinese Characters*
- Transparency 4B, *Significs and Phonetics—Elementary Level*
- Handout 4D, *Creating Chinese Characters—Elementary Level*
- Teacher's Guide 4D, *Creating Chinese Characters—Elementary Level—Answer Key*

Secondary Level

lesson four

- Transparency 4A, *Understanding Chinese Characters*
- Transparency 4C, *Significs and Phonetics—Secondary Level*
- Handout 4E, *Creating Chinese Characters—Secondary Level*
- Teacher's Guide 4E, *Creating Chinese Characters—Secondary Level—Answer Key*

Time

Suggested teaching time for this lesson: 1 class period

Suggested Procedure

1. Set the context for this activity by asking students to think of words that have the same pronunciation but have different meanings (*homonyms*) or spellings (*homophones*).

   - Examples of homonyms: bear ("to tolerate" and "an animal"); pool ("swimming pool" and "a game of billiards"); might ("maybe" and "strength").
   - Examples of homophones: "mail" and "male"; "symbol" and "cymbal"; "sea" and "see"; "ewe" and "you."

   The English system uses the alphabet to spell out words, and may use the same spelling or a slightly different spelling for words that have the same pronunciation but different meanings.

2. Engage students in an activity called "picture sentences." (This activity is similar to the "rebus" puzzles that many students may have previously played, in class or with friends.)

   Tell students not to use the alphabet to communicate. Ask them to draw objects that *sound* like the words they want to say but that actually mean something entirely different.

   To make this activity less difficult, students can also write words instead of sentences. For example, they could draw an eye to signify "I," or a picture of a sea to represent "see."

3. Ask a few students to share their "picture sentences" with the class by drawing their sentences on the board. Can their classmates guess the sentences by "reading" the pictures?

4. Explain to students that many writing systems evolved from systems of oral communication: in many cultures, speaking came before writing.

© SPICE

5. Inform students that the Chinese writing system used a method similar to this "rebus" method they just used to create characters for objects, words, or ideas that did not have any corresponding characters previously. The Chinese took an older character that had the same pronunciation, and used this character to stand for the new word. However, to distinguish the new character from the old one, a *signific* was added.

   Use Transparency 4A as a guide to explain how these characters, known as signific-phonetic characters, were created:

   - 手 signifies "hand" (a drawing with five fingers). 口 is pronounced *kǒu* and means "mouth." Creating a word which means "to beat," the Chinese added the *signific* graph 手 ("hand") to 口 *kǒu* ("mouth"), creating a character which is also pronounced *kòu*. This character （扣） indicates that "to beat" is done with a "hand" and not the mouth *kǒu*. Yet because *kou* was a character already in use at the time, this new character "to beat" is pronounced *kòu*.

   - The English writing system used a similar process to create more words by either using the same spelling for two different words (*homonyms*) or by slightly changing the spelling (*homophones*).

6. To more clearly illustrate this concept to students, ask students to recall what homonyms and homophones they listed in Procedure #1. You may wish to list students' answers on Transparency 4A.

7. Bring the discussion back to the Chinese language by introducing different significs and phonetics to the class, using Transparency 4B (elementary level) or Transparency 4C (secondary level)

8. Give students either Handout 4D (elementary level) or Handout 4E (secondary level). You may wish to have students do the handout on their own, in small groups, or as a class.

   If students are having difficulty with the terms *signific* and *phonetic*, remind them that the signific simply refers to a part of the character which gives readers a clue to the meaning of the character, while the phonetic gives readers a hint about the pronunciation of the character.

You may wish to point out the roots of the words themselves: *sign* for "signific," and *phone* for "phonetic." Other words with the same roots: significant, signify, signature, signal; telephone, phonics, phonograph, phonology.

9. Ask students to either memorize or keep the words from Handout 4D or 4E in mind. They will appear in the next lesson, Lesson Five.

✎ In Summary

10. Sum up the activity with the following points:

- Writing systems often develop *as a result of* oral communication systems; sometimes, written words are adapted to express spoken words already used within a community.
- A *signific* and *phonetic* component of a Chinese character work together to give the reader hints about the meaning and the pronunciation of the character.
- Although the Chinese writing system does contain many pictographs and ideographs, as shown in Lessons Two and Three, the writing system also includes many characters with phonetic origins, based more on sound rather than pictures or ideas.

© SPICE

UNDERSTANDING CHINESE CHARACTERS

Chinese Characters

significant + phonetic = character

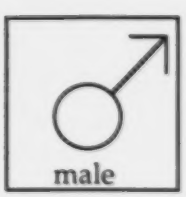
- SIGNIFIC: Helps you understand the meaning of the character
- PHONETIC: Helps you understand how to pronounce the character

Example:

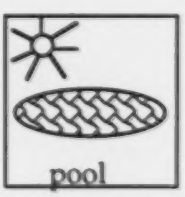
significant		*phonetic*		*character*
手 hand	+	口 kǒu (mouth)	=	扣 to beat (pronounced "kòu")

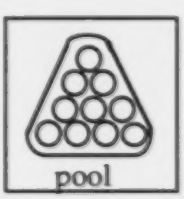
English Words

Homophones:



Homonyms:





Others:

_____

_____

_____

SIGNIFICS AND PHONETICS— ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Signific	*Meaning*
言	word
口	mouth

Phonetic	*Pronunciation*
昌	*chāng*
某	*mǒu*
乎	*hū*

© SPICE

SIGNIFICS AND PHONETICS—SECONDARY LEVEL

Signific	*Meaning*
氵	water
口	mouth
力	strength

Phonetic	*Pronunciation*
工	*gōng*
馬	*mǎ*
尼	*ní*

CREATING CHINESE CHARACTERS— ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Help! Some Chinese characters have fallen apart. Their parts are scattered into two categories below: the signific and the phonetic. One signific belongs with one phonetic to make one character.

The Chinese characters need your help to build them back together the way they were. Use your knowledge of significs and phonetics to make the characters whole again. Write the complete characters in the boxes at the bottom of the page.

SIGNIFICS:

言	口
word	mouth

PHONETICS:

昌	某	乎
chāng	mǒu	hū

Decide how you can put one signific and one phonetic together to make words that have the following meanings and pronunciations:

Two hints:
- One signific will be used twice
- The signific belongs to the left side of the character, while the phonetic belongs to the right side of the character

decide	sing	voice
móu	*chàng*	*hū*

© SPICE

CREATING CHINESE CHARACTERS—ELEMENTARY LEVEL—ANSWER KEY

Help! Some Chinese characters have fallen apart. Their parts are scattered into two categories below: the signific and the phonetic. One signific belongs with one phonetic to make one character.

The Chinese characters need your help to build them back together the way they were. Use your knowledge of significs and phonetics to make the characters whole again. Write the complete characters in the boxes at the bottom of the page.

SIGNIFICS:

言	口
word	mouth

PHONETICS:

昌	某	乎
chāng	mǒu	hū

Decide how you can put one signific and one phonetic together to make words that have the following meanings and pronunciations:

Two hints:
- One signific will be used twice
- The signific belongs to the left side of the character, while the phonetic belongs to the right side of the character

謀	唱	呼
decide	sing	voice
móu	*chàng*	*hū*

CREATING CHINESE CHARACTERS— SECONDARY LEVEL

Help! Some Chinese characters have fallen apart. Their parts are scattered into two categories below: the signific and the phonetic. One signific belongs with one phonetic to make one character.

The Chinese characters need your help to build them back together the way they were. Use your knowledge of significs and phonetics to make the characters whole again. Write the complete characters in the boxes at the bottom of the page.

SIGNIFICS:

口口	氵	力
2 mouths	water	strength

PHONETICS:

工	馬	尼
gōng	mǎ	ní

Decide how you can put one signific and one phonetic together to make words that have the following meanings and pronunciations:

One hint:
- The signific belongs to the left side of the character, while the phonetic belongs to the right side of the character

mud	work	scold
ní	*gōng*	*mà*

© SPICE

CREATING CHINESE CHARACTERS—SECONDARY LEVEL—ANSWER KEY

Help! Some Chinese characters have fallen apart. Their parts are scattered into two categories below: the signific and the phonetic. One signific belongs with one phonetic to make one character.

The Chinese characters need your help to build them back together the way they were. Use your knowledge of significs and phonetics to make the characters whole again. Write the complete characters in the boxes at the bottom of the page.

SIGNIFICS:

口口 2 mouths	氵 water	力 strength

PHONETICS:

工 gōng	馬 mǎ	尼 ní

Decide how you can put one signific and one phonetic together to make words that have the following meanings and pronunciations:

One hint:
- The signific belongs to the left side of the character, while the phonetic belongs to the right side of the character

泥 mud *ní*	功 work *gōng*	罵 scold *mà*

Lesson Five

CHINESE CHARACTERS IN CONTEXT

Introduction

With written language, characters do not exist in isolation but are embedded in a context. "Context" may include illustrations, previous knowledge, or other general clues which provide meaning in a story.

In this lesson, a story is written in English, interspersed with a limited number of modern Chinese characters. Encourage students to use the contextual clues of the story to help them decipher the meanings of the characters in the story. Several of the characters in the story were introduced to students in previous discovery exercises.

Two stories are provided in this lesson. Choose to read either the elementary level or the secondary level story according to your students' age and reading level. Elementary students will read a short story entitled, "The 人 Who Could Not Read 字" ("The Person Who Could Not Read Characters"). This story is approximately 150 words in length and contains about eighteen vocabulary words, eight of which have been presented in earlier lessons.

Secondary students will read a longer story (approximately 700 words), entitled "The 水牛 and the 老虎" ("The Water Buffalo and the Tiger"). This story includes about fifteen new vocabulary words, as well as approximately ten characters encountered in previous exercises.

Objectives

- to view Chinese written characters in the context of a story
- to use clues of context to understand a story
- to more fully understand how written Chinese communicates ideas

Materials

- Chinese-English dictionary, optional

lesson five

Elementary level

- Handout 5A, Elementary-level story: "The 人 Who Could Not Read 字"
- Handout 5B, "The 人 Who Could Not Read 字" —Glossary
- Teacher's Guide 5B, "The 人 Who Could Not Read 字"

Secondary Level

- Handout 5C, Secondary-level story: "The 水牛 and the 老虎"
- Handout 5D, "The 水牛 and the 老虎"—Glossary
- Teacher's Guide 5D, "The 水牛 and the 老虎"

Time

Suggested teaching time for this lesson: 1 class period

Teacher Preparation

1. Read whichever story is appropriate for your students. Familiarize yourself with the vocabulary written in Chinese characters.

If your class is using this exercise without having done the previous activities, begin this lesson by introducing the vocabulary highlighted in the story.

Suggested Procedure

2. Inform students that they are now going to read a story using modern Chinese characters. Some of the characters in the story will be familiar to them, as they have seen them in previous lessons. However, other characters will be completely new to students.
3. Instruct students to pay close attention to the plot of the story so they can decipher the meaning of each character or combination of characters. Remind students that sometimes two Chinese characters have the equivalent meaning of one word in English.
4. Give students a copy of the story prepared for their reading level. Allow ample time for them to read the story independently. *Use Handouts 5A and 5B for elementary students and Handouts 5C and 5D for secondary students.*

© SPICE

5. If students have trouble deciphering the characters or comprehending the story in general, you may wish to provide additional clues by reviewing the characters which were included in previous exercises. Doing this will refresh students' memories and provide them with some key vocabulary items.

   - Elementary level:

人 person	大 big
山 mountain	一 one
(老) 虎 tiger	上 above

   - Secondary level:

一 one	田 field	好 good
二 two	(老) 虎 tiger	看 see
三 three	口 mouth	目 eye(s)

6. Elementary level:
   When students have completed their reading, you may wish to ask comprehension questions like those for any reading assignment.

   - Who are the people in the story?
   - What animal appears in the story?
   - Where does the story take place? (What country?)
   - Where does the tiger live?
   - Why did the people who were hunters want to catch the tiger?
   - How did the hunters warn others about the tiger trap?
   - What happened to the village person?
   - Why did the village person fall into the trap?

7. Secondary level:
   When students have completed their reading, check for comprehension by asking questions such as the following:

   - What animals are involved in the story?
   - Why does the farmer curse his water buffalo?
   - What does the buffalo advise the tiger to do?
   - How does the water buffalo prepare himself for the duel?
   - What is the outcome of the duel?
   - Why does the farmer respect the water buffalo in the end?

8. After checking for general comprehension, see if students understand the meaning of specific characters included in the story. Ask students which characters were easiest to figure out and which the most difficult. Why? How did students figure out the characters and plot of the story?

✎ In Summary

9. Sum up the activity with the following points:

   - We can often tell the meaning of words in a story from context.
   - Deciphering the meaning of Chinese characters comes from understanding the separate meaning of the components, as well as the relationship between these components.

© SPICE

supplementary activities 5

CHINESE CHARACTERS IN CONTEXT

Objective

- to have students create their own stories using Chinese characters and English

Materials

- English-Chinese dictionary
- Writing utensils: paper, pens, pencils, markers

Time

Suggested as a supplement to Lesson Five

Suggested Approach

1. Encourage student creativity by asking students to write their own stories in English, using Chinese characters wherever possible.
2. Students can choose to either use the characters they learned in Lesson Five, or use an English-Chinese dictionary to look up new words for their stories.
3. You may also encourage students to illustrate their stories and share them with the class in a story-telling hour.

The 人 Who Could Not Read 字[2]

In ancient 中國 on a 山 there lived a fierce 老虎 who hurt 人 and animals. 一天, some 人 who were hunters 謀 to catch this 老虎. They made a 老虎 trap in the ground. On the wall near the 老虎 trap the 人 who were hunters wrote in 大字:

"ALL 人 WHO 走 HERE, PLEASE BE 小心.
THERE IS A 老虎 TRAP UNDER THIS 大 SIGN!"

While the 人 who were hunters were waiting for the 老虎, a village 人 who could not read 字 came 走 by 唱 a song. Suddenly, he fell into the 中 of the 老虎 trap. He called in a loud 呼 for 人 to help him. Another 人 heard and pulled him 上 from the 老虎 trap. Then, the 人 explained the meaning of the 字 which the 人 who were hunters had written on the wall.

The village 人 who could not read 字 sighed and said, "If I could read 字, then I would not have fallen 下 into the 中 of the 老虎 trap!"

[2] Adapted from a story prepared by Caryn White for the University of Arizona East Asia Study Center. Used by permission.

© SPICE

"The 人 Who Could Not Read 字"–Glossary

人 person, people, man, men	大 big
字 word, words, Chinese characters	走 walk, walked, walking
中 middle	小 small
國 country, kingdom	心 heart
中國 China ("Middle Kingdom")	小心 be careful
山 mountain	呼 voice
老虎 tiger	下 down
天 day	上 up
謀 decide	唱 sing, sang, singing

"The 人 Who Could Not Read 字"—Teacher's Guide

Following are some explanatory comments on several of the characters in "The Person Who Could Not Read Characters."

中國 China ("Middle Kingdom" or "Central States"). More than 2500 years ago, the Chinese believed that China was situated in the middle of the earth, which was popularly believed to be flat. The Chinese word for "China" reflected this world view. The character for "middle" (中) is an ideograph of an arrow piercing a target in the center. The second character means "nation."

老虎 Students previously learned the single character for "tiger." In modern Chinese, the two-character combination, 老虎, is used to mean "tiger." (老 literally means "old" or "respected.")

小心 Though the literal meaning of these characters are "small" and "heart" respectively, together they mean "be careful." This combination will undoubtedly be difficult for most students to guess. As a hint, you might ask students what they would say to a person who is about to step into a tiger trap.

人 This character can mean either "persons" or "person." Ask students how they know when it refers to one person in the story ("the village 人") or more than one person ("the 人 who were hunters"). Check if students noticed the plural marker in English to determine whether or not the character referred to a single person or to many people.

© SPICE

The 水牛 and The 老虎[3]

A 農夫 went to the rice 田, taking his 水牛 along to 犁. The 水牛 sank into the 泥 after a 半天 of 功. Only a small corner was finished. Meanwhile, the 農夫 罵[4] and whipped the animal for not being able to pull the 犁 faster.

"You stupid creature, slow and creeping! You lift your feet only after a lengthy struggle! Haven't you seen a 老虎? How 快 he runs! How 強 he is! You should learn from the 老虎."

The 水牛 could hardly stand up from the continuous whipping, and no longer able to bear the 罵, asked impatiently, "What ability does the 老虎 have? I am more 強."

The 農夫 paid no attention to the foolish remarks of the 水牛 but just kept on flogging and 罵 the beast.

"You belittle me," the 水牛 said. "Take me to see the 老虎 tomorrow. I'll challenge him and let you 看 with your own 目 who is more 強."

The next morning, the 農夫 took his 水牛 to the 老虎. The 強 animal caught the scent of the 水牛 and leapt from his lair ready to pounce on his prey. But the 水牛 shook his 二 curved 角 and called out, "老虎! 老虎! I haven't come to challenge you 今天, but merely to inform you that your 牙 are too dull. They won't be

---

[3]Adapted from the story "The Buffalo and the Tiger" [A Han Folktale], in *Chinese Folktales*, Louise and Yuan Hsi Kuo. Editors. California: Celestial Arts, 1976, pp. 67-69.

[4]Be careful! 農夫 is one word; 罵 is another!

able to pierce my heavy skin. Grind them for 三天; I'll likewise 磨尖 my 角. Then we'll fight a duel."

"Readily!" the 老虎 snarled and disappeared into his den.

The 老虎 ground his 牙 for 三天 and nights until they were razor 尖. The 水牛 also ground his 角, but only for 一天. The remaining 二天 were spent rolling his 身體 in 泥 and then straw. He repeated the process until his whole 身體 was covered with a heavy layer of 泥土, black and shiny. Nobody could ever detect the coating of straw.

On the fourth 天, the 老虎 and the 水牛 met at the appointed spot. The 老虎 saw the 水牛's 身體 covered with 泥土 and asked, "Why do you cover yourself with 泥土?"

"To withstand the heat of summer," the 水牛 replied. "I roll around the riverbank a few times 天天. That's my habit. Everybody knows that."

The 老虎 eyed the 水牛 and thought, "Nothing is wrong with him except that he looks fatter than ever." Then he laughed happily, "HO! HO! HO! Very 好. Your flesh looks quite tender. What a tasty meal I'll have!"

"老虎! 老虎! You may be able to threaten a pig or lamb, but not me. You won't be able to harm me or touch a single hair on my 身體."

"My 牙 were dull 三天 ago, but even then I'd have dared to eat you," the 老虎 replied. "今天 my 牙 are 尖. Do you really think I can't bite you to death?"

© SPICE

"Very 好," the 水牛 said mockingly. "Let's 看. I'll lie down and let you be the first to bite me 三 times. If you fail, I'll give you 三 butts with my 角."

Why would the 老虎 ever disagree to that? With a dreadful snarl, the 強老虎 pounced on the 水牛, and with 口 wide open, he sank his 尖牙 into the 水牛's 身體. 一 bite, 二, 三! *Was he dead?*

Not on your life! Only the cakes of 泥 filled with straw had fallen apart. As soon as the 老虎 had finished his 三 bites, the 水牛 got up, lowered his head, and, quick as a flash, thrust his curved 角三 times into the 老虎's 身體.

All this time, the 農夫 was watching very closely and observed how wise and brave the 水牛 really was. "Well, that's over," he sighed with relief.

The 農夫 had been deeply moved, and from that 天 on, he cherished his 水牛. He neither 罵 nor beat his 水牛 anymore. Up to now, although the 水牛 is not very 快 at pulling a 車 or 犁 in a 田, everyone respects his patience and ability.

"The 水牛 and The 老虎"—Glossary

農夫 farmer	快 fast
田 field	功 work
水 water	強 strong
牛 cow	看 look
水牛 water buffalo	目 eye(s)
犁 plow	一 one
泥 mud	二 two
土 earth	三 three
泥土 clay	角 horn(s)
半 half	牙 tooth (teeth)
天 day	磨 grind
今天 today	尖 sharp

© SPICE

天天 everyday	磨尖 to sharpen
罵 curse, cursing	身體 body
老虎 tiger	好 good
口 mouth	

"The 水牛 and The 老虎"—Teacher's Guide

Following is a list of two-character combinations in the story, "The Water Buffalo and The Tiger."

農夫 (farmer)	This combination literally means "one engaged in agriculture." The character 農 signifies agriculture, and the character 夫 refers to a person engaged in a service.
水牛(water buffalo)	Literally this combination means "water cow."
泥土 (clay)	This combination for "clay" literally means "mud" (泥) and "earth" (土).
半天 (long time)	While this combination literally means "half-day" (半 "half," and 天 "day"), it generally means "a long time."
天天 (everyday)	天 by itself means "day." Repeating the character means "everyday."
老虎 (tiger)	Students previously learned the single character for tiger. In modern Chinese, the two-character combination is used to mean "tiger." (老 literally means "old" or "respectful.")
磨尖 (to sharpen)	Literally, 磨 means "to grind" and 尖 means "sharp." Together they mean "to grind until sharp," or "to sharpen."
身體 (body)	The first character in this combination, 身, means "body"; the second character, 體, means "body," "trunk," or "substance." They are commonly used together to express "body."

Other notes:

二 (two)	In Chinese, the character 二 is used as a counter, as in counting from one to ten

© SPICE

(一,二,三 ...). However, in certain circumstances, the character 兩 is used to mean "two," usually "two (of something)," as in 兩 days, or 兩 dollars. In this story, the phrase "二 curved角" ("two curved horns") is substituted for "兩 curved 角," (which would be grammatically correct), simply because students are already familiar with the character.

犁 (plow)

The character 犁 refers to either the noun "plow," or the verb "to plow." The compound character consists of the character 利 (on top), meaning "benefit," gain," or "advantage," and the character 牛 (on bottom), meaning "cow." Have students analyze the relationship between these two components.

Lesson Six

LANGUAGE REFORM IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: ACHIEVING ORAL COMMUNICATION

Introduction

There are numerous dialects in the Chinese language. The term "dialect" usually refers to regional variations in a language. However, many Chinese dialects are mutually unintelligible, and, in fact, are as different from one another as are French and Spanish.

The presence of many spoken dialects among the people of the People's Republic of China (PRC) presents an immense problem for the nation's leaders, who wish to unite the population of more than a billion in pursuing common goals. This lesson will illustrate to students how China solved its problems of communication by choosing a national language.

Objectives

- to recognize that there are many spoken dialects in Chinese
- to understand how these different dialects pose a problem to communication throughout China
- to understand how oral communication is achieved through a common national language, as seen in the Chinese experience

Materials

- Chalk and chalkboard
- Overhead Projector
- Appendix A, *The Chinese Language*
- Handout 6A, *Dialect Exercise*
- Transparency 6B, *Dialect Groups in China*

Time

Suggested teaching time for this lesson: 1 class period

lesson six

Teacher Preparation

1. Review Appendix A, *The Chinese Language*. Pay special attention to the *Characteristics of Spoken Chinese* section, in which tone marks are presented.

Suggested Procedure

2. Divide students into small groups of four to six students each. Give each group a copy of Handout 6A.

3. Instruct the groups to make up an original pronunciation for each symbol on the handout. Encourage originality.

Students may try to use other languages they know (e.g., Spanish, French, pig-Latin, or some "code" language) to form their pronunciations for the symbols. To ensure that students understand the concept of *original* pronunciations, you may wish to offer some sample pronunciations for the first few symbols.

4. After students have created a pronunciation for each symbol, have each group create a sentence using some of the given symbols. Ask the group to write their sentence using the symbols at the bottom of Handout 6A.

5. Have each group present their sentence orally to the class, using the pronunciations derived by the group. Obviously, only those students who are members of the group presenting the sentence will understand the sentence when it is spoken.

6. Reiterate to the class that due to the vast number of regional dialects in China (as well as the geographical distance between the areas in which various dialects are spoken), many Chinese speakers cannot communicate orally with one another through their own dialects.

   For example, speakers of Mandarin (a dialect from Northern China) and Cantonese (a dialect from Southern China) would pronounce the following words as:

Meaning	*Mandarin*	*Cantonese*
I/me	wǒ	o
cup	bēi	buoy
rice	fàn	fan
walk	zǒu	zhao
look	kàn	hawn
person	rén	yən

© SPICE

The following sentence means, *The weather is good today.*

Characters: 今天好天氣.

Mandarin: Jīn tiān hǎo tiān qì.

Cantonese: Gom teen ho teen hay.

7. Emphasize to students the number of regional dialects in China by showing Transparency 6B, which is a partial listing of dialect groups in China and their respective number of speakers.

8. Encourage students to discuss the implications of such language variance. How would such a situation pose problems for nation-wide functions, such as radio, television, and newspaper? What solutions can students think of to overcome this problem of communication?

You may wish to further emphasize this point by making a list of possible solutions that students can develop. Evaluate the pros and cons of each solution.

9. The Chinese solved this problem of national communication by choosing a national language, *putonghua*, which is the Beijing dialect, commonly known in the United States as "Mandarin Chinese."

10. Introduce the concept of choosing a national language. Stimulate class discussion by asking the following questions:

    - If a nation is composed of groups of people who speak many different languages and dialects, then how can they communicate? If leaders wish to promote *one* common language, how can they choose which language is to become the national language? How might speakers of a language not chosen as the national language feel about the leaders' choice?

    Ask students to consider how English came to be the standard language in the United States.

    - How does the standardization of a language reflect the social and political needs of a nation?

11. Introduce the term "bilingual." Ask students the following questions:

- How should a country such as China introduce a common national language to speakers of various dialects?
- Should policy makers promote a bilingual population? Or should they encourage the entire population to speak only the national language?

Discuss the issue of bilingualism. Some students may be able to relate their own experiences of growing up bilingual. Other students may wish to address current trends in bilingualism in the United States.

✎In Summary

12. Sum up the activity with the following points:

- In China, there are many varying spoken dialects, but currently only one "official" language.
- It is through this "official" language, *putonghua*, that most Chinese citizens can communicate.
- Choosing a national language is one alternative available to national leaders in linguistically unifying a nation.

The ideas discussed in this lesson lead directly into Lesson Seven, *Language Reform in the People's Republic of China: Improving Written Communication*, which addresses the steps China has taken to overcome its difficulties of written communication.

© SPICE

DIALECT EXERCISE

Make up an *original* pronunciation for each symbol below. Do not use pronunciations from any other language you may know!

Idea/Word	*Symbol*	*Pronunciation*
person	人	_____
white	白	_____
river	河	_____
flower	花	_____
eat	吃	_____
ten	十	_____
see	看	_____
go	去	_____
child	子	_____
three	三	_____
fish	魚	_____

- Now, use at least three of the words above to make up your own sentence. Write the pronunciation of your sentence here:

_____

- Write your sentence in symbols here:

_____

DIALECT GROUPS IN CHINA

Dialect Group and Geographical Location	*Approximate Number of Speakers*
Northern Chinese (3 subgroups: Beijing, Nanjing, Chengdu)	800,000,000
Wu (Jiangsu, Zhejiang)	80,000,000
Cantonese (S. Guangxi, Guangdong)	80,000,000
Xiang (Hunan)	40,000,000
Hakka (N. Guangxi, Guangdong)	40,000,000
Min (Fujian, Hainan, Zhejiang, Guangdong, Taiwan)	50,000,000
Gan (Jiangxi)	20,000,000

(Source: Gunnemark, Erik V. *Countries, Peoples and Their Languages: The Geolinguistic Handbook.* Sweden: Geolingua, 1991.)

© SPICE

LANGUAGE REFORM IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: ACHIEVING ORAL COMMUNICATION

Objectives

- to recognize that spoken dialects exist in the United States, as well as in the People's Republic of China
- to identify dialect regions within the United States
- to understand how dialects reveal themselves through different vocabulary and pronunciation

Time

Suggested as a supplement to Lesson Six

Suggested Approaches

1. Discuss dialect variation in the United States. Engage students in activities or short research projects such as making a tape of various people from different regions of the country. Have each participant read or recite the same material, including key words that make particular pronunciations.
2. Use a map of the United States to help students identify various dialect regions.
3. Have students conduct a lexical survey, either in the classroom or on their own. Ask students to choose from a variety of vocabulary words. for example, have students ask others what word they use: (1) handbag, (2) purse, (3) pocketbook, or (4) bag.

Lesson Seven

LANGUAGE REFORM IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: IMPROVING WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Introduction

In this lesson, students will investigate various aspects of the language situation in modern China, reviewing the policies implemented by Chinese leaders. This lesson on language reform in the People's Republic of China serves as an example of planned language change, demonstrating to students how the Chinese official language policy aims to unify a society in transformation through a systematic means of written communication.

Objectives

- to identify the need for language planning in the People's Republic of China
- to understand the complexity of reform problems and ideas
- to understand the ways that China has attempted to effect language reform
- to recognize the relationship between linguistic changes in Chinese and deeper social changes of China

Materials

- Chalk and chalkboard
- Overhead Projector
- Transparency 7A, *Traditional and Simplified Characters*
- Transparency 7B, *Spelling in English*
- Transparency 7C, *Vocabulary in Chinese*
- Teacher's Guide 7C, *Vocabulary in Chinese—Answer Key*
- Appendix B, *Language Reform in the People's Republic of China*

lesson seven

- Appendix C, *Reprint of Simplified Characters*
- Appendix D, *Pinyin Pronunciation*

Time

Suggested teaching time for this lesson: 1 class period

Teacher Preparation Suggested Procedure

1. Review Appendices B, C, and D for background information on language reform in China.

2. Set the context of this lesson by introducing the concept of illiteracy. Have students discuss the effects of illiteracy. How does a person's inability to read and write characters or an alphabet affect a person's ability to function in society?

3. Relate the concept of illiteracy to the Chinese language situation. What constraints existed in traditional Chinese society that kept the majority of the people from becoming literate?

   For example:
   - the complexity of the writing system
   - the unequal distribution of wealth and education
   - lack of leisure time for working class citizens

   Do students have suggestions as to how literacy might be promoted in China?

4. The first step the Chinese took to overcome illiteracy was to simplify written characters. The second step was to standardize this simplification through *pinyin* romanization. This lesson will focus on both of these steps.

5. Through their own previous experiences with pictographs and ideographs, students are well aware of the difficulties involved in writing and reproducing characters.

   Inform students of the trend for characters simplification in the People's Republic of China. Explain that the Chinese leaders have solicited the help of the common people, much as students were asked to modify characters in the earlier lessons.

   Remind students that one of the ultimate aims of language reform in China has been to spread literacy, helping as many people as possible learn how to read and write.

6. Ask students to construct a grid listing possible advantages and disadvantages to simplifying written characters. Some sample entries for a grid are listed below:

Advantages	Disadvantages
• reduces the number of strokes needed to write characters; makes characters easier to learn and reproduce; less time-consuming	• those people who learned characters before simplification will have to learn them again
• less characters to learn	• characters will no longer look like the object or idea they represent; too much change
• most people will be involved in determining how the language will change for their own benefit	• it is difficult to direct change if too many people, like the common people, are contributing at once; too much confusion

7. Introduce the concept of *pinyin* romanization. This system is designed to help teach the standard pronunciation of the common language (also called *putonghuà*).

8. Now show students Transparency 7A, showing traditional and simplified Chinese characters with *pinyin* romanization.

9. Have students complete the following activity:

   Divide the class into three groups, and assign one group to each character form or *pinyin* spelling. Tell each group to learn its examples.

10. After several minutes, remove Transparency 7A from the overhead projector and ask each group to reproduce the forms assigned to them. Compare the success of the three groups in completing its respective task.

    Most likely, the group assigned the traditional long-form characters will experience the most difficulty in reproducing its characters. The group assigned the simplified characters should be fairly successful in reproducing a reasonable likeness of each character. And the group responsible for reproducing the romanized spelling of the pronunciation will undoubtedly succeed in completing its task.

This activity is *not* meant to frustrate students. Those students in the group who reproduced the traditional long-form characters must understand that the difficulties in accomplishing this task is not a reflection of their own shortcomings, but a reflection of the difficulties of the written language.

If you cover the topic of romanization versus characters, you may wish to have students construct a grid of advantages and disadvantages, similar to the one constructed for character simplification earlier in this lesson. While students have already experienced the difficulties involved in learning characters, they should also be sensitive to the cultural attachment of the character system, which are both issues in the debate for and against romanization.

11. Ask students to summarize the ideas they have now formed regarding language reform in the People's Republic of China.

12. There are few better ways for students to understand the need for language reform and the resistance to substantive language change that may occur from a new language policy than by using English as an example.

    As you show students Transparency 7B, generate class discussion about the possibility of spelling reform for English:

    List A
    - How many different spellings are there for each sound?
    - How do students studying English know when to use which spelling to represent the desired sound?
    - Are there any solutions for such spelling difficulties?

    List B
    - What if someone were to propose revising the spelling rules for English so that the same sound was consistently written with the same alphabet letter (or combination of letters)?
    - What problems are already evident with spelling reform?
    - Would English speakers accept this type of spelling reform? Why or why not? Who would be the most likely to accept it?
    - Who would be opposed? What values are reflected by those who would oppose or support such reform?

© SPICE

It might be interesting to use the word "ghoti" (which spells "fish") to bring home the point of the exercise. This word was contrived by a linguist and was taken from the following English spellings:

gh as in enough
o as in women
ti as in nation

13. Move on to the next point: Vocabulary changes also result from changes in society. Words and word usage may change in the process of either natural or directed change.

    For example, the word "icebox" became less known as the word "refrigerator" took its place. This was a natural evolution: "icebox" was a literal term, indicating a box which was constantly filled with ice to preserve food that needed to be kept cold. With changes in technology, this object became known as a "refrigerator." Related to this word are others, such as "to refrigerate."

    Have students analyze the components of the word "refrigerator" (*re* means "again; *frig* means "cold") to illustrate how the word "fits" the object. Thus, as new objects are created or transformed, vocabulary items must be developed to express these objects.

14. Transparency 7C shows some examples from Chinese. Using the chart, give students the literal translation and see if they can figure out the English word for each item.

15. Now, have students analyze the following examples of directed vocabulary change and evaluate how such changes reflect deeper changes in values and attitudes in society.

    For instance, the terms *chāi* (差) and *fū* (夫)[4] were often used to describe people's occupations. Both connote inferiority or servitude. Today, labor occupations are given positive names to demonstrate their positive position in society. Below are two examples of new occupational names which reflect the current values of Chinese society.

---

[4] For those students who read "The Water Buffalo and the Tiger," it is necessary to explain that the one exception to this term is the use of the word *nóngfū*, (農夫), which means "peasant" or "farmer." This term is still used in the People's Republic of China and does not hold a negative connotation.

postal worker

old term: *yóu chāi*	new term: *yóu dì yuán*
meaning: "mail servant"	meaning: "member who sends mail"

worker

old term: *kǔ lì*[5]	new term: *gōng rén*
meaning: "worker"	meaning: "factory worker"

16. Have students discuss the implications of the changes in vocabulary through these two examples. How do students react to the following questions?

    - What are Chinese attitudes toward working people today?
    - How does language reflect these attitudes?

✎ In Summary

17. Sum up the activity with the following points:

    - Traditional Chinese characters are complex and have posed problems for Chinese people in becoming literate.
    - To eliminate illiteracy, language reform in the People's Republic of China has taken three forms: simplifying written characters, choosing a national language, and romanizing Chinese spellings.
    - Vocabulary changes in both English and Chinese reflect larger societal changes.

[5] This term is the source of the derogatory expression "coolie," used to refer to Chinese laborers in America. The literal meaning of *kǔ lì* is "bitter strength."

TRADITIONAL AND SIMPLIFIED CHARACTERS

English meaning	*traditional character*	*simplified character*	*pinyin pronunciation*
study	學	学	xué
horse	馬	马	mǎ
door	門	门	mén
nation	國	国	guó

SPELLING IN ENGLISH

List A

cow	throw	gate	food	tough
bough	go	wait	true	fight
	toe	eight	knew	phone
	goat	lay	tune	
	lone		through	
	soul			

List B

cow	thro	gat	food	tuf
bow	go	wat	troo	fit
	to	at	noo	fon
	got	la	toon	
	lon		throo	
	sol			

© SPICE

VOCABULARY IN CHINESE

ENGLISH WORD	*ROMANIZATION*	*LITERAL TRANSLATION*
_____	*gōng gòng qì chē*	public-share-steam-car
_____	*diàn huà*	electric-talk
_____	*dǎ zì jī*	hit-character-machine

VOCABULARY IN CHINESE—ANSWER KEY

ENGLISH WORD	*ROMANIZATION*	*LITERAL TRANSLATION*
(public) bus	*gōng gòng qì chē*	public-share-steam-car
telephone	*diàn huà*	electric-talk
typewriter	*dǎ zì jī*	hit-character-machine

© SPICE

LANGUAGE REFORM IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: IMPROVING WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Objectives

- to understand the existence of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)
- to examine the relation between IPA and the creation of a standard language system in the People's Republic of China
- to understand that the phenomenon of changing vocabulary occurs in all languages
- to compare changes in English usage with those in Chinese

Time

Suggested as supplements to Lesson Seven

Suggested Approaches

1. In relation to their investigation of romanization schemes for Chinese characters and spelling in English, students might be interested in learning the International Phonetic Alphabet. This alphabet attempts to assign one orthographic symbol to on sound, similar to the *pinyin* romanization system.

2. Have students discuss current changes in English vocabulary resulting from changes in societal values. For example, there are currently trends to change such words as mailman, mankind, and chairman to postal worker, humankind, and chairperson, respectively. There are also trends to change third person pronoun usage from the commonly used masculine to a combination of masculine and feminine forms (s/he, he or she) or to plural forms (they, them, their).

3. For example, the third person pronoun in Chinese was traditionally written as the following. using the person or man radical component:

他	人
tā	
he, she, her, him	person, man component

4. Now, one sees a trend toward differentiation; when the characters is used to refer specifically to females, the female component is used, and the characters is written as:

她	女
tā	
she, her	female component

© SPICE

APPENDICES

THE CHINESE LANGUAGE

Both American and Chinese scholars disagree about the origins of the Chinese language, especially its writing system. In this unit, we focus on both the pictographic and ideographic nature of the Chinese writing system, as well as the phonetic element in Chinese characters. Despite a wide range of opinions regarding the nature and history of Chinese, Chinese characters fall into a number of categories, some of which are described in further detail in this appendix. Some characters can fall into more than one of these categories. In this sense, we can see that although the Chinese writing system may have originated as a pictographic and ideographic system, it has evolved to encompass phonetic characters and phonetic loans, as well as compound ideographs and other combinations.

Pictographs

The earliest recorded Chinese characters were largely pictographic in nature, appearing first on oracle bones (divination instruments) and records of the Shang Dynasty. These early characters included a large number of recognizable drawings. For example:

sun	moon	eye	mouth

Ideographs

- *Simple ideographs*

Ideographs represent more abstract or complex thoughts. Ancient Chinese used the ideographs 1 (一), 2 (二), and 3 (三).

Another type of ideograph uses a pictograph with an indicator to draw attention to a certain quality or aspect of the picture. For example:

up/above: 上	knife: 刀	tree: 木
down/below: 下	knife edge: 刃	root(s): 本

- *Compound ideographs*

One way that the Chinese conveyed more complex meanings than available through pictographs and ideographs was through compound ideographs. These compound ideographs are composed of two or more components, often called radicals. The meaning of this type of character derives from the association of these components. For example:

木 (tree) + 木 (tree) = 林 (forest)

木 (tree) + 日 (sun) = 東 (east)

火 (fire) + 火 (fire) = 炎 (blaze)

Significic and Phonetic Compounds

Over 90 percent of modern Chinese characters are composed of two components, which are known as a significic and a phonetic. The general category of meaning is derived from the significic while the general approximation of pronunciation is derived from the phonetic element. Below is a chart showing such examples: (Take note of the different tones of the four characters using the same phonetic!)

phonetic	*meaning*	*pronunciation*
馬	horse	mǎ

character	*meaning*	*significic*	*meaning*	*pronunciation*
媽	mother	女	woman	mā
瑪	agate	玉	jade	mǎ
螞	ant	虫	insect	mǎ
罵	scold	口	mouth	mà

Characteristics of Spoken Chinese

Chinese is a tonal language. There are four tones in the Mandarin dialect, also known as the national language or *putonghua* ("the common language"): first tone—high, level; second tone—rising; third tone—dipping; and fourth tone—falling sharply. Tones

are particularly important in Chinese because they distinguish among completely different words or ideas.

When the Chinese language is transcribed into alphabetic symbols (such as *pinyin*), the tone marks are represented as follows:

first tone: —
second tone: ˊ
third tone: ˇ
fourth tone: ˋ

Tones are an obvious feature of Chinese, and often are the feature that most Westerners associate with the Chinese language.

LANGUAGE REFORM IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

China has historically faced an extremely complex language situation. Since mastering the traditional writing system required much time and energy, all those except for the elite in Chinese society were often illiterate. Various ethnic groups (also known as "national minorities"), languages within China, and the differing dialects of the Chinese language historically have posed obstacles for oral communication. In the international scene today, the non-alphabetic nature of the Chinese writing system often hinders the integration of Chinese within the transnational community in areas such as telegraph and railroad signals. Chinese language reform policy seeks to address each of these issues.

Fighting Illiteracy Through Character Simplification

Literacy, the fundamental ability of a person or society to read and write, is essential to any society attempting comprehensive social change. To master the traditional writing system, the Chinese were forced to spend enormous amounts of time and energy. Because of traditional Chinese society's inequality of resources and access to education, most common people in China did not master the writing system. This situation of illiteracy in the People's Republic of China was partially remedied by a more equitable system of distribution of resources and by an "anti-illiteracy campaign." The Chinese government sent work teams to various towns and villages, teaching adults how to read and write Chinese. But, the traditional character system still required more time and energy than most Chinese could afford. Thus came the impetus for initiating character simplification.

The terms "character simplification" refer to reducing the number of characters in use (by eliminating variants and seldom-used characters) and reducing the number of strokes in commonly used characters. Although the common people of China had long used simplified characters, these characters had not been standardized. For example, one form of a simplified character may have been used in the north, while another form may have been used in the south. Wanting to both standardize these simplified characters and allow the common people to participate in the decision-making process, language planners solicited suggestions from the people. They asked the common people which characters should be simplified, and in what form. In January 1956, the State Council published the "Scheme for Simplifying Chinese

© SPICE

Characters." Simplified characters were then introduced gradually over the next few years following this publication.

The Role of Dialects and Minority Languages in China

As noted in this unit, dialects are numerous in China. However, the presence of Chinese dialects is complicated even further by the presence of national minorities in China, many of whom have their *own* spoken languages and writing systems separate from the Chinese language and writing system. There are fifty-six nationalities in the People's Republic of China, the "majority" Han nationality and fifty-five "minority" nationalities. The languages spoken by the minority nationalities include members of several different language families: Sino-Tibetan, Austro-Asiatic, Zhuang-Tai (Southern and Southwestern China), Altaic (Northern and Northwestern China), and the Indo-European language family (Tajik and Russian languages). Some of the major languages from these families that are spoken in China include Tibetan, Korean, Mongolian, Uyghur, and Kazakh.

With such a diverse group of language families and dialects within a common geographic region, one may wonder how the Chinese themselves view themselves linguistically. Both American and Chinese scholars often disagree about using the term "dialects" when discussing the many language varieties within China's borders, since the term itself usually connotes a language variety which is indeed inferior to a more nationally accepted or standardized variety. According to current trends in linguistics, it is important to consider the attitudes that speakers of a certain language hold of their own languages or dialects. Thus, although "dialects" of Chinese may differ greatly from one another, sometimes enough so to hinder understanding between speakers, the speakers of various Chinese dialects usually identify themselves as Chinese; their regional speaking forms are therefore often considered variants of one language.[6]

Though often sharing a common national identity, the Chinese people nonetheless remained linguistically divided. China's leaders sought to unify the nation, especially among members of dialect and language minority groups. Chinese leaders also hoped to integrate national minorities into Chinese political and cultural life. To accomplish these goals, Chinese leaders chose a national language, a common spoken language which would be promoted throughout the nation. This question of choosing a national language brought up the larger issue of *which* language to choose as a national language. How did the leadership justify choosing one

---

[6] A reverse situation occurs in Scandanavia. Norwegian and Swedish are similar enough to be mutually intelligible. However, each is considered a separate national language in its own right. Few, if any, people consider Norwegian and Swedish to be two dialects of one language.

language over another? Based on the number of original speakers before the initiation of language reform (and not on the fact that Beijing had been one of the centers of Chinese culture and history), Chinese leaders chose the Mandarin dialect, originally spoken in Northern China, with Beijing[7] pronunciation as the key. This common spoken language then became known as *putonghua*, which literally means, "the common language."

Choosing this national language raised some questions regarding the status of Chinese language dialects as compared to the Beijing dialect. Addressing this issue, Chinese Prime Minister Zhou En-lai proclaimed that dialects would not be eliminated. *Putonghua* would be popularized as a common spoken language, but dialects would be tolerated alongside the common language. Promotion of the national language targeted primarily schoolchildren and teachers. In this way, Chinese leaders hoped there would be a gradual transition from the home dialect to the national language. Special attention was paid to national minority communities, as this language policy was also aimed at integrating national minorities into the mainstream Chinese life. Efforts at popularizing *putonghua* began as early as 1955 and have been maintained, to varying degrees, to the present.

The relationship between Chinese dialects and the Chinese writing system has been a long debated topic. Although some Chinese dialects are as mutually unintelligible as French and Spanish, other dialects are mutually understandable. Some groups of Chinese people learn to comprehend dialects other than their own because of frequent contact with speakers of those dialects. And although the Chinese writing system has long been claimed to "unify" speakers of different dialects in China, the writing system is based on the grammar of the national language, Mandarin Chinese, and speakers of other dialects do not learn to write Chinese characters and sentences through their own dialects. Thus, national communication has actually been achieved by the choosing of a national language, rather than through the Chinese characters.

Romanizing Chinese Characters

Even with the use of simplified characters, the Chinese writing system is often unsuitable for certain needs in modern technology. Since many languages in the world are recorded in an alphabetic system, some Chinese language planners have felt that Chinese should become alphabetic sometime in the future.

The concept of romanization, or transliterating the sound of Chinese words into Roman alphabet letters, is not new. However, being dissatisfied with the existing systems for transliteration,

[7] "Beijing" is the *pinyin* romanization system's spelling of "Peking."

Chinese linguists set about to create a new, more accurate and standardized system. The "Scheme for the Chinese Phonetic Script" was passed by the First National People's Congress in February 1958, introducing what is now known as the *pinyin* romanization system. *Pinyin* is based on the Beijing (Peking) pronunciation of the Mandarin dialect. The system attempts to present one sound as one symbol in the Roman alphabet; *pinyin* helps speakers of other Chinese language varieties, as well as of other nationalities and languages, learn the standard pronunciation of *putonghua*, the common language. It is also used for such functions as telegrams and railroad signals, and is incorporated into a manual-alphabet system and a Braille system, for teaching the deaf and blind, respectively.

The use of *pinyin* has drawn many highly emotional debates among proponents of *pinyin* versus advocates of retaining Chinese characters for all functions. It is not difficult to imagine the technical requirements involved in implementing such a fundamentally different writing system. Nor is it difficult to realize the linguistic constraints against mastering such a change. The debate between the sole use of Chinese characters and romanization has yet to cease. However, Chinese language planners have long maintained that Chinese characters will never be lost or forgotten; specialists would be trained to preserve the Chinese writing system in much the same way that some Western nations train specialists in Latin or ancient Greek. Indeed, *pinyin* romanization serves important purposes in a changing Chinese society, yet, for many people, imposes serious fundamental threats to the preservation of an integral part of Chinese culture, its traditional writing system.

REPRINT OF SIMPLIFIED CHINESE CHARACTERS

	long-form (traditional)	simplified
study	學	学
horse	馬	马
door	門	门
country	國	国

© SPICE

PINYIN PRONUNCIATION

Initial Sounds

pinyin symbol	approximate sound	*pinyin* symbol	approximate sound
b (devoiced)[8]	bay	q (palatal)	cheer
p	pay	x	she
m	may	zh (retroflex)[9]	judge
f	fair	ch (retroflex)	church
d (devoiced)	day	sh (retroflex)	shirt
t	take	r	leisure
n	nose	z	adds
l	low	c	seats
g (devoiced)	gate	s	say
k	kite	y	yea
h	hay	w	way
j (palatal)[10]	jeer		

Final Sounds

pinyin symbol	approximate sound	*pinyin* symbol	approximate sound
a	father	iao	meow
o	saw	iu	feud
e	ugh	ian	yen
i	see	in	in
u	rude	iang	ee+young
ü	German "u"	ing	sing
er	hurt	iong	u+young
ai	aisle	ua	Guam
ei	eight	uei	way
ao	now	un	went
ou	soul	uang	oo+ang
an	ah+n	ueng	oo+eng
en	under	ue	u+eh
ang	ah+ng	uan	u+an
eng	sung	un	u+n
ong	doe+ng	uai	wife
ia	Asia	ui	we
ie	yes	uan	one

[8] *Devoiced* means that the vocal cords do not vibrate.

[9] *Retroflex* means that the tip of the tongue is slightly curled against the palate.

[10] *Palatal* means that the tip of the tongue touches the hard palate.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chang, Raymond and Margaret Scrogin Chang. *Speaking of Chinese.* New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1978.
- A highly readable account of the Chinese language, this book also describes the cultural history behind Chinese. Especially helpful for Western language speakers who have little or no knowledge of Chinese.

Chiu, Rosaline Kwan-Wai. *The Three-Fold Objective of the Language Reform in Mainland China in the Last Two Decades.* Quebec: International Center for Research on Bilingualism, 1969.
- This concise summary provides a valuable basis for understanding the recent language reform movement in the People's Republic of China.

Chu, Yu-kuang. "The Chinese Language." In John T. Meskill, Ed. *An Introduction to Chinese Civilization.* Mississippi: D.C. Heath and Company, 1973, pp. 587-616.
- A very thorough summary of the basic characteristics of Mandarin and the relationship of linguistic structure to the thought process.

Cooper, Lee. *The Chinese Language for Beginners.* Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1973.
- Designed for all ages, this short manual describes writing, pronunciation, and vocabulary with humor, relating whimsical stories utilizing vocabulary given in the text itself.

Creel, Herrlee. *Chinese Writing.* Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1943.
- This short pamphlet concentrates on the historical evolution and structural form of Chinese characters and sentences, as well as the relation of Chinese writing to Chinese culture.

DeFrancis, John. *The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984.
- An excellent source for remedying existing misconceptions about Chinese, this book also addresses issues such as the nature of Chinese characters and Chinese language reform.

DeFrancis, John. *Nationalism and Language Reform in China.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950.
- One of the most prominent scholars on the Chinese language, DeFrancis offers a comprehensive look at the social and

linguistic factors influencing the language reform movement in China.

Dugan, William. *How Our Alphabet Grew: The History of the Alphabet.* New York: Golden Press, 1972.
- Especially suited for young students, this book presents a short history of communication through various forms and alphabets.

Evans, Kyril and Jane Barclay Evans. *A Phonetic Alphabet for the English Language.* Ontario: Griffin and Richmond Company, Limited, 1957.
- Introduces the layperson to the spelling reform movement.

Gelb, I. J. *A Study of Writing.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965.
- An interesting account of writing systems in which the author investigates several features of communication. This book also offers information on comparative writing systems, such as Sumerian, Egyptian, Hittite, Japanese, and Greek.

Gunnemark, Erik V. *Countries, Peoples and Their Languages: The Geolinguistic Handbook.* Sweden: Geolingua, 1991.

Hoffstein, Robert M. *The English Alphabet: An Inquiry Into Its Mystical Construction.* New York: Kaedmon Publishing Company, 1975.
- Hoffstein analyzes each letter of the modern English alphabet, speculating on its origin and meaning.

Hsu, Chung-shu, Ed. *Chai ku wen tzu tien (Jia gu wen zi dian).* [Oracle Bone Dictionary] Cheng-tu: Ssu-chuan tzu shu chu ban she, 1988.
- Written in Chinese, this dictionary shows various forms of oracle bones and explains the origin of their meanings.

Karlgren, Bernard. *The Chinese Language.* Ronald Press, 1949.
- A popularized account of the history of the Chinese language written by one of the most distinguished specialists on Chinese philology.

Keightley, David N. *Sources of Shang History: The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions of Bronze Age China.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.
- Written for a scholarly audience, this book is particularly fascinating for its figures of inscriptions and graphs from oracle bones.

Lehmann, Winfred P., ed. *Language and Linguistics in the People's Republic of China.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975.

- An account of the American Linguistics Delegation's visit to China from 16 October - 13 November 1974. A fascinating and provocative narrative of their experiences is accompanied by factual information on topics such as language reform, language teaching, and national minority languages.

Lewis, John. Illustrations by Peter Rigby. *The Chinese Word for Horse — Book 1.* New York: Two Continents Publishing Group Limited, 1977.

Lewis, John. Illustrations by Peter Rigby. *The Chinese Man and the Chinese Woman—Book 2.* New York: Two Continents Publishing Group Limited, 1977.

Lewis, John. Illustrations by Peter Rigby. *The Chinese Word for Thief—Book 3.* New York: Two Continents Publishing Group Limited, 1977.

- The above three books are cleverly illustrated stories, showing Chinese characters' picture-like qualities. Each book contains a glossary of characters used in the book for students' reference.

Quong, Rose. *Chinese Written Characters: Their Wit and Wisdom.* New York: Cobble Hill Press, 1968.

- This fancifully written text with etymological derivations for a variety of characters includes bits of information and sayings of the philosopher Mencius in interesting asides.

Seybolt, Peter J. and Gregory Kuei-Ke Chiang, eds. *Language Reform in China: Documents and Commentary.* New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1979.

- This compilation of essays about language reform offers many perspectives on the necessity and nature of language reform in China.

Wang, William S.Y., "The Chinese Language." In *Scientific American,* February 1973.

- This article offers a contemporary treatment of Chinese, emphasizing such topics as the simplified written forms and computer analysis of language.

Wieger, Dr. S.J. L. *Chinese Characters: Their Origin, Etymology, History, Classification and Signification.* Translated by L. Davrout, S.J. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1965.

- A book of etymological lessons with illustrations of ancient characters. The introduction includes an informative historical sketch of written Chinese.

Wiese, Kurt. *You Can Write Chinese.* New York: Viking Press, Viking Seafarer Edition, 1973.

- Useful for younger readers, this book includes bold drawing correlating brush strokes with images to show the possible origins of certain simple characters.

Woon, Wee Lee. *Chinese Writing: Its Origin and Evolution.* Macau: University of East Asia, 1987.

- This book analyzes the origin and evolution of Chinese characters, from pottery inscriptions, the evolution of Chinese characters, to the development of phonetics in Chinese writing.

Wurn, S.A., et. al, eds. *Language Atlas of China.* Hong Kong: Longman Group, 1988.